Plato's Apologia Socratis

Dual-Language Greek & English

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Greek text copyright © 399BC Plato

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There follows, in parallel columns, the original Ancient Greek of Plato's *Ἀπολογία Σωκράτους* (*Apologia Socratis*, *The Apology of Socrates*) and a translation into English. The word *ἀπολογία* is the Ancient Greek technical term for the defense presented at trial by the defendant, and Plato's *Apology* is a vivid account of Socrates's defense at his trial in 399BC. Plato knew Socrates well and was present at the trial, and we are among those who believe his account to be historically accurate, at least in the same sense that the speeches in Thucydides are historically accurate. Certainly it is true to the character of Socrates. One of Plato's earliest dialogues, it provides our clearest and most compelling picture of Socrates the man, of his extraordinary character, integrity, intellect, and devotion to moral philosophy and right living. We were fortunate to have first read it in the original Greek in Roger Bagnall's introductory course at Columbia University and have reread it countless times in the nearly fifty years since.* Plato's *Apology* has been our guide through life — *φιλοσοφία βίου κυβερνήτης*. We hope that you will find it equally compelling and meaningful.

*We have no pretensions to scholarship, nor to any expertise beyond that of a devoted amateur fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to teach various levels of Greek over the years, often including Plato's *Apology*. The flaws and failings in this work are of course entirely our own and in spite of Roger Bagnall's excellent teaching. No teacher, even a Roger Bagnall, could be faulted for failing to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear like the author of this text. ☺ Readers interested in a scholarly commentary will find Burnet's *Plato's Euthyphro, Apology, and Crito* unsurpassed.

The Greek and English texts are formatted side by side, paragraph by paragraph, with the Stephanus page numbers embedded in the Greek text in parenthesized bold firebrick: e.g., **(17a)**. In the footnotes, which have been formatted in a third column to minimize page flipping, the reader will find fuller explication of the Greek, along with a little commentary here and there. As this work is intended to be distributed and viewed electronically, we have used a 12pt font and, to make each text column legibly wide, 17in×11in ledger-size pages. On narrow screens, it may be most convenient to display the width of a single column and scroll right or left as needed.

The translator's task is never an easy one; translation is not an exact science. We strive to be true to the meaning and spirit of the Greek while conforming to it as closely as possible. We embarked on the endeavor hoping for the sake of the parallel presentation to be nearly uniformly literal, but, having had to abandon that naive effort in despair after just the first two Stephanus pages, have more often than we would like found it necessary to deviate to a lesser or greater degree from that ideal in order to accurately convey the import of the Greek and to be true to Socrates's cogently plain and straightforward manner of speaking. We have, however, still sought to avoid the gratuitous deviations from literal that seem common among translations: great works should be translated with humility; to attempt to improve on them is arrogance.

We were motivated to write this translation by the feeling that all the translations with which we were familiar failed to rise to the original. And while the result of our efforts is yet another translation that fails to rise to the original, we hope that the venture will be justified and rendered worthwhile by the footnotes, which are intended to give the reader a much fuller understanding of what the Greek actually says than the usual one-size-fits-all translations that opaquely provide only the single phrasing on which the translator settled.

Abbreviations used in the notes:

LSJ	Liddell, Scott, & Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*
Burnet	John Burnet, *Plato's Euthyphro, Apology, and Crito*
Denn.	J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 2nd ed.
Smythe	Herbert Weir Smythe, *Greek Grammar*

(It may be customary to include the name of the publisher and date of publication, but we aren't here to do homage to a system of corporate greed.)

The Perseus Project at Tufts University is also an excellent resource for this and other works of classical antiquity: `https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/`

(17a) *"Οτι μὲν ὑμεῖς, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πεπόνθατε ὑπὸ τῶν ἐμῶν κατηγόρων, οὐκ οἶδα· ἐγὼ δ' οὖν καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὀλίγου ἐμαυτοῦ ἐπελαθόμην, οὕτω πιθανῶς ἔλεγον. καίτοι ἀληθές γε ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν οὐδὲν εἰρήκασιν. μάλιστα δὲ αὐτῶν ἓν ἐθαύμασα τῶν πολλῶν ὧν ἐψεύσαντο, τοῦτο ἐν ᾧ ἔλεγον ὡς χρῆν ὑμᾶς εὐλαβεῖσθαι μὴ ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ἐξαπατηθῆτε* (17b) *ὡς δεινοῦ ὄντος λέγειν. τὸ γὰρ μὴ αἰσχυνθῆναι ὅτι αὐτίκα ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ἐξελεγχθήσονται ἔργῳ, ἐπειδὰν μηδ' ὁπωστιοῦν φαίνωμαι δεινὸς λέγειν, τοῦτό μοι ἔδοξεν αὐτῶν ἀναισχυντότατον εἶναι, εἰ μὴ ἄρα δεινὸν καλοῦσιν οὗτοι λέγειν τὸν τἀληθῆ λέγοντα· εἰ μὲν γὰρ τοῦτο λέγουσιν, ὁμολογοίην ἂν ἔγωγε οὐ κατὰ τούτους εἶναι ῥήτωρ. οὗτοι μὲν οὖν, ὥσπερ ἐγὼ λέγω, ἤ τι ἢ οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς εἰρήκασιν, ὑμεῖς δέ μου ἀκούσεσθε πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν — οὐ μέντοι μὰ Δία, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κεκαλλιεπημένους γε λόγους, ὥσπερ οἱ τούτων,* (17c) *ῥήμασί τε καὶ ὀνόμασιν οὐδὲ κεκοσμημένους, ἀλλ' ἀκούσεσθε εἰκῇ λεγόμενα τοῖς ἐπιτυχοῦσιν ὀνόμασιν — πιστεύω γὰρ δίκαια εἶναι ἃ λέγω — καὶ μηδεὶς ὑμῶν προσδοκησάτω ἄλλως· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν δήπου πρέποι, ὦ ἄνδρες, τῇδε τῇ ἡλικίᾳ ὥσπερ μειρακίῳ πλάττοντι λόγους εἰς ὑμᾶς εἰσιέναι. καὶ μέντοι καὶ πάνυ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοῦτο ὑμῶν δέομαι καὶ παρίεμαι· ἐὰν διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν λόγων ἀκούητέ μου ἀπολογουμένου δι' ὧνπερ εἴωθα λέγειν καὶ ἐν ἀγορᾷ ἐπὶ τῶν τραπεζῶν, ἵνα ὑμῶν πολλοὶ ἀκηκόασι, καὶ ἄλλοθι, μήτε* (17d) *θαυμάζειν μήτε θορυβεῖν τούτου ἕνεκα. ἔχει γὰρ οὑτωσί. νῦν ἐγὼ πρῶτον ἐπὶ δικαστήριον ἀναβέβηκα, ἔτη γεγονὼς ἑβδομήκοντα· ἀτεχνῶς οὖν ξένως ἔχω τῆς ἐνθάδε λέξεως. ὥσπερ οὖν ἄν, εἰ τῷ ὄντι ξένος ἐτύγχανον ὤν, συνεγιγνώσκετε δήπου ἄν μοι εἰ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ φωνῇ τε καὶ τῷ τρόπῳ* (18a) *ἔλεγον ἐν οἷσπερ ἐτεθράμμην, καὶ δὴ καὶ νῦν τοῦτο ὑμῶν δέομαι δίκαιον, ὥς γέ μοι δοκῶ, τὸν μὲν τρόπον τῆς λέξεως ἐᾶν — ἴσως μὲν γὰρ χείρων, ἴσως δὲ βελτίων ἂν εἴη — αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο σκοπεῖν καὶ τούτῳ τὸν νοῦν προσέχειν, εἰ δίκαια λέγω ἢ μή· δικαστοῦ μὲν γὰρ αὕτη ἀρετή, ῥήτορος δὲ τἀληθῆ λέγειν.*

What impression my accusers have made on you, men of Athens,[1] I don't know, but even I almost forgot myself,[2] so persuasively were they speaking. And yet they have said virtually nothing true.[3] And among the many lies they told I especially wondered at this, that they said you must be on your guard against being deceived by me, on the grounds of my being clever at speaking.[4] For not to be ashamed that they will at once be refuted by me in deed,[5] when I am manifestly in no way whatever clever at speaking, this seemed to be most shameless of them — unless perhaps they call someone who speaks the truth clever at speaking. For if that's what they mean, I would agree that as a speaker I am not to be compared with them. Now[6] they, as I say, have said little or nothing true, but you will hear from me the whole truth — not, by Zeus,[7] men of Athens, speech prettified, like theirs, with fine words and phrases, nor crafted;[8] rather you will hear things spoken off the cuff with unprepared words[9] — for I trust what I say to be just — and let no one among you expect otherwise: for it would not be fitting, men, to come before you at my age like a boy telling stories. And I very much beg and beseech this of you, men of Athens: if you hear me defending myself with the same words with which I am accustomed to speak at the tables in the marketplace, where many of you have heard me, and elsewhere, not to wonder or make a disturbance on account of that. For it's like this:[10] I have now for the first time come to court, being seventy years old; I am therefore simply a stranger[11] to the way of speaking[12] here. So just as you would, if in fact I happened to be a foreigner, of course excuse me if I were to speak in the dialect and manner in which I had been raised, I now ask in particular this bit of justice,[13] as it seems to me: to allow my manner of speech — be it for the worse or the better[14] — and consider and pay heed only[15] to whether I speak justly or not: for that[16] is the virtue of a juror, while that of a speaker is to speak the truth.

[1]The dialogue begins with Socrates's presentation of his defense, though it will quickly become clear that Socrates is concerned not with defending himself, but with telling it like it is. His audience of 500 jurors (judges) who will decide the case — and, after a conviction, the sentence — would normally be addressed as δικασταί (*jurors, judges*); Socrates significantly addresses them rather as ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι (*men of Athens*). While this is still respectful, Socrates later makes clear (in 40a) that he does not regard them all as true judges. We omit ὦ = *O*: while in Greek ὦ almost always accompanies a vocative, and omitting it would indicate a lack of respect, *O* would be awkwardly archaic and poetic.

[2]That is, not simply did not recognize himself, but nearly forgot who he was. The Greek ὑπ' αὐτῶν ("at their hands," "because of them") would be clumsy to render explicitly in English.

[3]*Virtually* is an awkwardly colloquial choice, but while the Greek ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν is often translated as *so to speak*, that English phrase softens a *qualitatively* awkward expression or extreme characterization, whereas the Greek phrase always softens a *quantitatively* extreme expression.

[4]The Greek δεινός = *fearsome, awesome*, and hence also *wondrous, clever* — here with a pejorative tone we would have tried to convey by *crafty* were it not for the use of δεινός again in the next sentence.

[5]The Greeks commonly contrasted λόγοι (*words*) with ἔργα (*deeds*), as occurs below in (32a). Here ἔργῳ means in the actual event, that is, that how Socrates presents his defense will make clear that he speaks plainly, not with a contrived cleverness. "In deed" is a clumsy rendering, but omitting it seemed equally clumsy.

[6]μὲν οὖν is transitional; Socrates is returning to his point that his accusers have said virtually nothing true.

[7]οὐ μέντοι μὰ Δία is resoundingly emphatic.

[8]κεκοσμημένους is more literally *arranged*, in the sense of being carefully composed to achieve the desired effect.

[9]More literally, "chance" or "extemporaneous" words, the former of which seemed too vague and the latter too formal.

[10]Again awkwardly colloquial, but too stilted would be "the situation is as follows" or "it is thus." The Greek οὑτωσί (*thus*) refers to what follows, and the addition of the deictic iota *-ί* emphasizes that what follows is the explanation. See the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41.

[11]ξένως could also be rendered *foreigner*, and we have so rendered ξένος in the next sentence.

[12]λέξεως meaning the diction, the vocabulary, the phrasing used in court.

[13]δίκαιον is predicative: literally, "I ask this of you, [as a] just [thing]."

[14]More literally, "for perhaps it would be worse, perhaps better."

[15]αὐτὸ τοῦτο more literally = *this very thing*.

[16]That is, to pay heed only to whether what he will say is just.

Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν δίκαιός εἰμι ἀπολογήσασθαι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πρὸς τὰ πρῶτά μου ψευδῆ κατηγορημένα καὶ τοὺς πρώτους κατηγόρους, ἔπειτα δὲ πρὸς τὰ ὕστερον καὶ τοὺς (18b) ὑστέρους. ἐμοῦ γὰρ πολλοὶ κατήγοροι γεγόνασι πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ πάλαι πολλὰ ἤδη ἔτη καὶ οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς λέγοντες, οὓς ἐγὼ μᾶλλον φοβοῦμαι ἢ τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ἄνυτον, καίπερ ὄντας καὶ τούτους δεινούς· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι δεινότεροι, ὦ ἄνδρες, οἳ ὑμῶν τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐκ παίδων παραλαμβάνοντες ἔπειθόν τε καὶ κατηγόρουν ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον οὐδὲν ἀληθές, ὡς ἔστιν τις Σωκράτης σοφὸς ἀνήρ, τά τε μετέωρα φροντιστὴς καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς πάντα ἀνεζητηκὼς καὶ τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω (18c) ποιῶν. οὗτοι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, οἱ ταύτην τὴν φήμην κατασκεδάσαντες, οἱ δεινοί εἰσίν μου κατήγοροι· οἱ γὰρ ἀκούοντες ἡγοῦνται τοὺς ταῦτα ζητοῦντας οὐδὲ θεοὺς νομίζειν. ἔπειτά εἰσιν οὗτοι οἱ κατήγοροι πολλοὶ καὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἤδη κατηγορηκότες, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ λέγοντες πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν ᾗ ἂν μάλιστα ἐπιστεύσατε, παῖδες ὄντες ἔνιοι ὑμῶν καὶ μειράκια, ἀτεχνῶς ἐρήμην κατηγοροῦντες ἀπολογουμένου οὐδενός. ὃ δὲ πάντων ἀλογώτατον, ὅτι οὐδὲ τὰ (18d) ὀνόματα οἷόν τε αὐτῶν εἰδέναι καὶ εἰπεῖν, πλὴν εἴ τις κωμῳδοποιὸς τυγχάνει ὤν. ὅσοι δὲ φθόνῳ καὶ διαβολῇ χρώμενοι ὑμᾶς ἀνέπειθον — οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ πεπεισμένοι ἄλλους πείθοντες — οὗτοι πάντες ἀπορώτατοί εἰσιν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀναβιβάσασθαι οἷόν τ' ἐστὶν αὐτῶν ἐνταυθοῖ οὐδ' ἐλέγξαι οὐδένα, ἀλλ' ἀνάγκη ἀτεχνῶς ὥσπερ σκιαμαχεῖν ἀπολογούμενόν τε καὶ ἐλέγχειν μηδενὸς ἀποκρινομένου. ἀξιώσατε οὖν καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὥσπερ ἐγὼ λέγω, διττούς μου τοὺς κατηγόρους γεγονέναι, ἑτέρους μὲν τοὺς ἄρτι κατηγορήσαντας, ἑτέρους δὲ (18e) τοὺς πάλαι οὓς ἐγὼ λέγω, καὶ οἰήθητε δεῖν πρὸς ἐκείνους πρῶτόν με ἀπολογήσασθαι· καὶ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ἐκείνων πρότερον ἠκούσατε κατηγορούντων καὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ τῶνδε τῶν ὕστερον.

Now it is right that I first make a defense,[1] men of Athens, with regard to the first false accusations made against me and my first accusers, and then with regard to the later accusations and my later accusers.[2] For those spreading among you baseless[3] accusations against me are numerous and have been making their accusations for many years already — accusers whom I fear more than these around Anytus, though even they are fearsome.[4] But those ones are more terrible, men, who, taking the majority of you aside since you were children, persuaded you and made accusations against me no more true, that some Socrates is a wise man, a cogitator of heavenly bodies and one investigating all the things under the earth and making the weaker argument the stronger.[5] These, men of Athens, the ones pouring the dregs of this reputation onto me,[6] they are my fearsome accusers: for the ones hearing these accusations believe that those who engage in these investigations do not worship gods.[7] Second, these accusers are numerous, and have been making accusations for a long time already, and moreover have been speaking to you at that age at which you were especially trusting, some of you being boys or teenagers, simply prosecuting a one-sided case, without anyone making a defense.[8] And what is most absurd of all, it is not even possible to point them out and name them, unless one of them happens to be a writer of comedies.[9] And all those who persuaded you by malice and maligning[10] — and those persuaded in turn persuading others — are the most difficult to deal with: for it is not even possible to summon to court and refute any of them, but rather it is necessary to make a defense as though shadowboxing and to make a refutation with no one responding.[11] Now, grant, as I say, my accusers to be twofold, some just now making accusations, but others, whom I have indicated, making accusations for a long time already, and deem it necessary that I first make a defense against the latter: for you have heard them making accusations before, and much more, than these later accusers.

[1]Literally, "I am right first to make a defense": Greek tends to say in the personal what English says impersonally. So also ὥς γέ μοι δοκῶ ("as I seem to me" = "as it seems to me") in the preceding sentence.

[2]The distinction is between those who have now formally brought Socrates to trial (Anytus, Meletus, and Lycon) and all those who for many years have been spreading malicious stories about him.

[3]Literally, "saying nothing true."

[4]Lest beginning students of Greek be left scratching their heads: in order to render this passage into acceptably natural English, we have, while taking care to be true to what the Greek is saying, had to use an English phrasing quite different from the Greek phrasing, partly for reasons explained in the endnote on participles p.41.

[5]"Wise man" is pejorative. All of these are allusions to the merciless lampooning of Socrates in Aristophanes's *Clouds*. While we have here translated ὁ κρείττων λόγος and ὁ ἥττων λόγος as the weaker and the stronger argument, in the context of *Clouds* these arguments, personified by actors, are more usually and better translated as *Right* and *Wrong*. In *Clouds*, Socrates is portrayed as engaging in all sorts of absurd intellectual pursuits and in particular of using sophistry to pervert right into wrong and vice versa. It is because Socrates was so well known and remarkable to the man on the street that Aristophanes was able to base a comedy on him, and the ways in which Aristophanes lampoons Socrates in *Clouds* for the sake of a laugh make it easy to imagine the kinds of malicious stories that must have been circulating about him. Socrates will shortly make clear the real basis for that malice.

[6]In his commentary, John Burnet cites evidence that this metaphor refers to the common prank of pouring wine dregs onto sleeping people.

[7]θεοὺς νομίζειν is a critically important phrase: following Burnet, we take this to mean "worship gods," *not* (as it is often translated) "believe in gods." In Greek, νόμος = *custom*, *usage*, and hence *law*, and hence the verb νομίζειν of holding by custom (believing) or practicing by custom (in this context, worshipping). (See LSJ νομίζω I.1&4 and all of II, especially II.1.)

[8]Meaning that this was all done slyly behind Socrates's back, with no one to speak up for him.

[9]Again a reference to Aristophanes. ὀνόματα … αὐτῶν εἰδέναι καὶ εἰπεῖν: literally, "to know or speak their names." The Greek ἄλογος means *unspeakable* or *without reason*, *irrational*, but there is certainly no pun here on it being most unspeakable that it is not possible to name these accusers. ἀλογώτατον refers rather to the situation, and hence *absurd* seems the best rendering.

[10]This is the first occurrence of the very important word διαβολή, which is for the most part best rendered as *prejudice*. Too formal would be *aspersion*, *slander*, or *calumny*; too informal *backbiting*.

[11]That is, with no one to cross-examine.

Εἶεν· ἀπολογητέον δή, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ ἐπιχειρητέον (19a)
ὑμῶν ἐξελέσθαι τὴν διαβολὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ ἔσχετε ταύτην ἐν οὕτως ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ. βουλοίμην μὲν οὖν ἂν τοῦτο οὕτως γενέσθαι, εἴ τι ἄμεινον καὶ ὑμῖν καὶ ἐμοί, καὶ πλέον τί με ποιῆσαι ἀπολογούμενον· οἶμαι δὲ αὐτὸ χαλεπὸν εἶναι, καὶ οὐ πάνυ με λανθάνει οἷόν ἐστιν. ὅμως τοῦτο μὲν ἴτω ὅπῃ τῷ θεῷ φίλον, τῷ δὲ νόμῳ πειστέον καὶ ἀπολογητέον.

Very well; a defense must be made, and I must try to wrest[1] from you the prejudice that you have held for a long time, this in so short a time. Now, I could wish this to happen, if it should be a better thing for you and for me, and to accomplish something more by way of defending myself:[2] but I think it to be difficult, and it certainly does not escape me how difficult.[3] Nevertheless, let this take the course that is pleasing to the god;[4] the law must be obeyed and a defense must be made.[5]

[1]Literally, simply "take." In the Greek, both clauses are phrased impersonally: "it must be attempted to take . . . ."

[2]Meaning that if some greater good would be accomplished, he would wish to succeed in removing the prejudice. And it will become clear that Socrates, while not at all concerned with securing acquittal, does indeed regard his defense as an opportunity to turn the listeners from wrong to right thinking and thus as serving a greater good.

[3]Literally, "what sort of thing it is," meaning that he fully realizes the magnitude of the task.

[4]The phrase *τοῦτο μὲν ἴτω ὅπῃ τῷ θεῷ φίλον* is simple yet difficult to render; we have here verbatim used the translation Burnet suggests. The phrase *τῷ θεῷ* (*the god*, notably in the singular) occurs in multiple places. Sometimes that singular refers to a particular god or oracle, sometimes it seems to have a greater significance, especially its recurrence as the final two words of the dialogue in (42a).

[5]In the *Crito*, the dialogue after the *Apology*, Socrates argues the moral necessity of obeying the law on the basis of the social contract.

Ἀναλάβωμεν οὖν ἐξ ἀρχῆς τίς ἡ κατηγορία ἐστὶν ἐξ ἧς **(19b)** *ἡ ἐμὴ διαβολὴ γέγονεν, ᾗ δὴ καὶ πιστεύων Μέλητός με ἐγράψατο τὴν γραφὴν ταύτην. εἶεν· τί δὴ λέγοντες διέβαλλον οἱ διαβάλλοντες; ὥσπερ οὖν κατηγόρων τὴν ἀντωμοσίαν δεῖ ἀναγνῶναι αὐτῶν· "Σωκράτης ἀδικεῖ καὶ περιεργάζεται ζητῶν τά τε ὑπὸ γῆς καὶ οὐράνια καὶ τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω* **(19c)** *ποιῶν καὶ ἄλλους ταὐτὰ ταῦτα διδάσκων." τοιαύτη τίς ἐστιν· ταῦτα γὰρ ἑωρᾶτε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῇ Ἀριστοφάνους κωμῳδίᾳ, Σωκράτη τινὰ ἐκεῖ περιφερόμενον, φάσκοντά τε ἀεροβατεῖν καὶ ἄλλην πολλὴν φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα, ὧν ἐγὼ οὐδὲν οὔτε μέγα οὔτε μικρὸν πέρι ἐπαΐω. καὶ οὐχ ὡς ἀτιμάζων λέγω τὴν τοιαύτην ἐπιστήμην, εἴ τις περὶ τῶν τοιούτων σοφός ἐστιν — μή πως ἐγὼ ὑπὸ Μελήτου τοσαύτας δίκας φεύγοιμι — ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τούτων,* **(19d)** *ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, οὐδὲν μέτεστιν. μάρτυπας δὲ αὖ ὑμῶν τοὺς πολλοὺς παρέχομαι, καὶ ἀξιῶ ὑμᾶς ἀλλήλους διδάσκειν τε καὶ φράζειν, ὅσοι ἐμοῦ πώποτε ἀκηκόατε διαλεγομένου — πολλοὶ δὲ ὑμῶν οἱ τοιοῦτοί εἰσιν — φράζετε οὖν ἀλλήλοις εἰ πώποτε ἢ μικρὸν ἢ μέγα ἤκουσέ τις ὑμῶν ἐμοῦ περὶ τῶν τοιούτων διαλεγομένου καὶ ἐκ τούτου γνώσεσθε ὅτι τοιαῦτ' ἐστὶ καὶ τἆλλα περὶ ἐμοῦ ἃ οἱ πολλοὶ λέγουσιν.*

Now, let us take up from the beginning from what accusation the prejudice against me has arisen, trusting[1] in which Meletus has brought this indictment against me. Very well: what do my detractors say to malign me?[2] One ought to read their complaint just as one would the complaint of formal plaintiffs:[3] "Socrates does wrong and busies himself with investigating the things under the earth and in the heavens and making the weaker argument the stronger and teaching others these same things." It is suchlike — for you yourselves saw these things in Aristophanes's comedy, some Socrates being bourne about[4] there, claiming to walk on air and babbling much other nonsense, about which I know neither a lot nor a little.[5] And I do not say this to disparage such knowledge, if anyone is knowledgeable about such things — may I not have to defend any such case at the hands of Meletus[6] — , but to be sure, men of Athens, I have no part in such things. And in turn I call the majority[7] of you as witnesses, and think that all of you who have ever heard me conversing — and such ones among you are many — that[8] you ought to inform and tell each other if any of you ever yet heard me conversing at all[9] about such things, and from this you will know that the other things that the many say about me are just as accurate.[10]

[1] *πιστεύων* could be taken to mean *trusting*, *believing in*, *relying on*, *having faith in*. We have chosen *trusting* as encompassing both *believing in* and *relying on*, with their corresponding implications of having acted in naive good faith or cynical bad faith.

[2] Literally, "saying what do the ones slandering [me] slander [me]." Here we have the verb *διαβάλλω* corresponding to the noun *διαβολή*, and in order to capture the predominant sense *prejudice* for *διαβολή*, we have preferred *detractors* and *malign*; although Socrates doesn't pull any punches, *slanderers* and *slanders* seemed too strong and angry.

[3] *ἀντωμοσία* is the legal technical term for a sworn complaint against a defendant. Socrates now frames the malicious stories circulating behind his back as an open declaration in court. We have rendered *κατηγόρων* (*accusers*) as *formal plaintiffs*; all cases, whether civil or criminal, were brought by private parties.

[4] Referring to the Socrates in the play as swinging out aerially by means of the crane used in tragedies for the theatrical appearance of a god (the *deus ex machina*).

[5] More literally, "have neither a lot nor a little knowledge."

[6] Meant derisively.

[7] We variably translate *οἱ πολλοί*, which occurs twice in this sentence, as *the majority* and *the many*.

[8] Plato's Greek reflects the spontaneousness of Socrates's words, here by the device of repeating the verb *φράζειν* after the aside. We have instead repeated the word *that*.

[9] Literally, "a lot or a little."

[10] Literally, "that also the other things the many say about me are such," meaning of the same character. "False" would be too strong and direct, and variations on "such" and "likewise" too vague and unnatural in English; we have tried by "just as accurate" to retain what should, as in the original, remain an implication.

Ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὔτε τούτων οὐδέν ἐστιν, οὐδέ γ' εἴ τινος ἀκηκόατε ὡς ἐγὼ παιδεύειν ἐπιχειρῶ ἀνθρώπους καὶ χρήματα (19e) *πράττομαι, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἀληθές. ἐπεὶ καὶ τοῦτό γέ μοι δοκεῖ καλὸν εἶναι, εἴ τις οἷός τ' εἴη παιδεύειν ἀνθρώπους ὥσπερ Γοργίας τε ὁ Λεοντῖνος καὶ Πρόδικος ὁ Κεῖος καὶ Ἱππίας ὁ Ἠλεῖος. τούτων γὰρ ἕκαστος, ὦ ἄνδρες, οἷός τ' ἐστὶν ἰὼν εἰς ἑκάστην τῶν πόλεων τοὺς νέους — οἷς ἔξεστι τῶν ἑαυτῶν πολιτῶν προῖκα συνεῖναι ᾧ ἂν βούλωνται — τούτους πείθουσι* (20a) *τὰς ἐκείνων συνουσίας ἀπολιπόντας σφίσιν συνεῖναι χρήματα διδόντας καὶ χάριν προσειδέναι. ἐπεὶ καὶ ἄλλος ἀνήρ ἐστι Πάριος ἐνθάδε σοφὸς ὃν ἐγὼ ᾐσθόμην ἐπιδημοῦντα· ἔτυχον γὰρ προσελθὼν ἀνδρὶ ὃς τετέλεκε χρήματα σοφισταῖς πλείω ἢ σύμπαντες οἱ ἄλλοι, Καλλίᾳ τῷ Ἱππονίκου· τοῦτον οὖν ἀνηρόμην — ἐστὸν γὰρ αὐτῷ δύο υἱεῖ — "ὦ Καλλία," ἦν δ' ἐγώ, "εἰ μέν σου τὼ υἱεῖ πώλω ἢ μόσχω ἐγενέσθην, εἴχομεν ἂν αὐτοῖν ἐπιστάτην λαβεῖν καὶ μισθώσασθαι ὃς* (20b) *ἔμελλεν αὐτὼ καλώ τε κἀγαθὼ ποιήσειν τὴν προσήκουσαν ἀρετήν, ἦν δ' ἂν οὗτος ἢ τῶν ἱππικῶν τις ἢ τῶν γεωργικῶν· νῦν δ' ἐπειδὴ ἀνθρώπω ἐστόν, τίνα αὐτοῖν ἐν νῷ ἔχεις ἐπιστάτην λαβεῖν; τίς τῆς τοιαύτης ἀρετῆς, τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης τε καὶ πολιτικῆς, ἐπιστήμων ἐστίν; οἶμαι γάρ σε ἐσκέφθαι διὰ τὴν τῶν υἱέων κτῆσιν. ἔστιν τις," ἔφην ἐγώ, "ἢ οὔ;" "πάνυ γε," ἦ δ' ὅς. "τίς" ἦν δ' ἐγώ "καὶ ποδαπός, καὶ πόσου διδάσκει;" "Εὔηνος," ἔφη, "ὦ Σώκρατες, Πάριος, πέντε μνῶν." καὶ ἐγὼ τὸν Εὔηνον ἐμακάρισα εἰ ὡς ἀληθῶς* (20c) *ἔχοι ταύτην τὴν τέχνην καὶ οὕτως ἐμμελῶς διδάσκει. ἐγὼ γοῦν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκαλλυνόμην τε καὶ ἡβρυνόμην ἂν εἰ ἠπιστάμην ταῦτα· ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἐπίσταμαι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι.*

But to be sure, none of these things, nor yet if you have heard from anyone that I attempt to teach people and charge fees, neither is that true.[1] Although this also seems to me to be good, if someone is able to teach people just as Gorgias of Leontini and Prodikos of Ceos and Hippias of Elis.[2] For each of them, men, is able, going to each of the cities, to persuade the young — to whom it is permitted to associate with whomever they wish of their fellow citizens for free — to persuade these young to forsake the company of their fellows and associate with them,[3] paying money and giving thanks in addition. Since for that matter[4] there is another wise man, a Parian, whom I know to be sojourning here:[5] for[6] I chanced to meet with a man who has paid more money to sophists than all others combined have, Kallias the son of Hipponikos: now I asked him — for he has two sons — "Kallias," I said, "if your two sons were colts or calves, we would be able to find and hire an overseer who would cultivate in them excellence of their proper kind,[7] and this person would be one either of the horse trainers or the farmers. But since your sons are human, whom do you have in mind to take on as an overseer for them? Who has understanding of such virtue, human and civic? For I suppose you to have considered this on account of having sons. Is there someone," I said, "or not?" "Certainly," he said. "Who," I said, "and from where, and for how much does he teach?" "Euenos, Socrates," he said, "a Parian, for five minæ." And Euenos had my congratulations,[8] if truly he had this skill and taught so tunefully.[9] I myself at any rate would put on airs and think highly of myself if I had this know-how. But to be sure, men of Athens, I do not.

[1]Another Platonic device for capturing the spontaneity of Socrates's words: the original is slightly anacolouthetic, with the point about teaching and charging fees inserted as a thought that has occurred to Socrates mid sentence.

[2]Throughout we have, arguably inconsistently, with few exceptions closely transliterated personal names while using the usual Anglicizations for place names.

[3]*Them* = Gorgias, etc. This whole passage is ironic, with a barely concealed derisive amusement.

[4]LSJ *ἐπεί* B.4.

[5]That is, Athens.

[6]This is a good example of the *explanatory* or *epexegetic* *γάρ*, explained in the end note on epexegetic *γάρ* on p.41.

[7]Literally, "make them fine and good with respect to their proper excellence." *καλώ τε κἀγαθώ* ("fine and good") is a very common stock phrase. *ἀρετή* = *virtue*, *excellence*.

[8]Literally, "I deemed Euenos happy," which seemed too unnatural, or "I blessed Euenos," which seemed to introduce a religious flavor not present in the original.

[9]For want of an equivalent English metaphor, we have retained that of the Greek. The sense is *modestly* or (as LSJ puts it) *without vulgar excess*, but *tunefully* also captures the wryly satirical observation that Euenos is able to accomplish this great end for a fee that just happens to match what a well-do-to Athenian could afford to pay. Cp. *πλημμέλεια* (*being out of tune*, *being off-key*) in (22d).

Ὑπολάβοι ἂν οὖν τις ὑμῶν ἴσως· “ἀλλ’ ὦ Σώκρατες, τὸ σὸν τί ἐστι πρᾶγμα; πόθεν αἱ διαβολαί σοι αὗται γεγόνασιν; οὐ γὰρ δήπου σοῦ γε οὐδὲν τῶν ἄλλων περιττότερον πραγματευομένου ἔπειτα τοσαύτη φήμη τε καὶ λόγος γέγονεν, εἰ μή τι ἔπραττες ἀλλοῖον ἢ οἱ πολλοί. λέγε οὖν ἡμῖν τί (20d) ἐστιν, ἵνα μὴ ἡμεῖς περὶ σοῦ αὐτοσχεδιάζωμεν.” ταυτί μοι δοκεῖ δίκαια λέγειν ὁ λέγων, κἀγὼ ὑμῖν πειράσομαι ἀποδεῖξαι τί ποτ’ ἐστὶν τοῦτο ὃ ἐμοὶ πεποίηκεν τό τε ὄνομα καὶ τὴν διαβολήν. ἀκούετε δή. καὶ ἴσως μὲν δόξω τισὶν ὑμῶν παίζειν· εὖ μέντοι ἴστε, πᾶσαν ὑμῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐρῶ. ἐγὼ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, δι’ οὐδὲν ἀλλ’ ἢ διὰ σοφίαν τινὰ τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα ἔσχηκα. ποίαν δὴ σοφίαν ταύτην; ἥπερ ἐστὶν ἴσως ἀνθρωπίνη σοφία· τῷ ὄντι γὰρ κινδυνεύω ταύτην εἶναι σοφός. οὗτοι δὲ τάχ’ ἄν, οὓς ἄρτι (20e) ἔλεγον, μείζω τινὰ ἢ κατ’ ἄνθρωπον σοφίαν σοφοὶ εἶεν, ἢ οὐκ ἔχω τί λέγω· οὐ γὰρ δὴ ἔγωγε αὐτὴν ἐπίσταμαι, ἀλλ’ ὅστις φησὶ ψεύδεταί τε καὶ ἐπὶ διαβολῇ τῇ ἐμῇ λέγει. καί μοι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, μὴ θορυβήσητε, μηδ’ ἐὰν δόξω τι ὑμῖν μέγα λέγειν· οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν ἐρῶ τὸν λόγον ὃν ἂν λέγω ἀλλ’ εἰς ἀξιόχρεων ὑμῖν τὸν λέγοντα ἀνοίσω. τῆς γὰρ ἐμῆς, εἰ δή τίς ἐστιν σοφία καὶ οἵα, μάρτυρα ὑμῖν παρέξομαι τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἐν Δελφοῖς. Χαιρεφῶντα γὰρ ἴστε που. οὗτος (21a) ἐμός τε ἑταῖρος ἦν ἐκ νέου καὶ ὑμῶν τῷ πλήθει ἑταῖρός τε καὶ συνέφυγε τὴν φυγὴν ταύτην καὶ μεθ’ ὑμῶν κατῆλθε. καὶ ἴστε δὴ οἷος ἦν Χαιρεφῶν, ὡς σφοδρὸς ἐφ’ ὅτι ὁρμήσειεν. καὶ δή ποτε καὶ εἰς Δελφοὺς ἐλθὼν ἐτόλμησε τοῦτο μαντεύσασθαι — καί, ὅπερ λέγω, μὴ θορυβεῖτε, ὦ ἄνδρες — ἤρετο γὰρ δὴ εἴ τις ἐμοῦ εἴη σοφώτερος. ἀνεῖλεν οὖν ἡ Πυθία μηδένα σοφώτερον εἶναι. καὶ τούτων πέρι ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὑμῖν αὐτοῦ οὑτοσὶ μαρτυρήσει, ἐπειδὴ ἐκεῖνος τετελεύτηκεν.

Now perhaps one of you would respond,[1] “But, Socrates, what is your business?[2] Whence have these these prejudices against you arisen? For of course if you were doing nothing out of the ordinary, this reputation and these stories would not have come about,[3] unless you were doing something of a different sort than most people. Now tell us what that is, in order that we not judge you rashly.”[4] Someone saying this seems to me to speak justly, and I will try to explain to you what it is that has brought about this reputation[5] and prejudice against me. Listen.[6] And perhaps I would seem to some of you to be joking:[7] but know well, I will be telling to you the whole truth. For I, men of Athens, have acquired this reputation on no account other than a certain wisdom. What sort of wisdom is this? The very kind that is perhaps human wisdom:[8] for in fact I am likely to be wise in this respect. Now perhaps those of whom I was just now speaking[9] might be wise with respect to some greater wisdom than human, or how to characterize[10] it I don’t know, for I do not understand it myself, and anyone who says so is lying and saying so to incite prejudice against me. Do not make a disturbance,[11] men of Athens, not even if I seem to you to speak boastfully, for the story I will tell you is not mine, but that of one worthy of your credence,[12] for I supply for you as witness of my wisdom, if indeed it is wisdom of some kind and of what sort, the god in Delphi. For I suppose you know Khairephon. He was my friend from youth and a friend to the majority of you, and he went into and returned from exile with you.[13] And you know what sort Khairephon was, how impetuous he was at whatever he set about. And in particular[14] he once went to Delphi and ventured to consult the oracle about this — as I say, men, do not make a disturbance[15] — for indeed he asked whether anyone was wiser than I. Now the Pythian priestess answered that no one was wiser. And concerning this his brother here will bear witness to you, since he has died.[16]

[1] *ὑπολαμβάνω* has the root sense *take up* and hence is used of picking up a thread in a discourse, replying, rejoining, retorting, interjecting, and the like. As Socrates is taking up what he sees as a very reasonable objection by a juror, we have chosen the mild “respond.”

[2] *πρᾶγμα* = *thing*, something that is done or made, and hence *matter*, *affair*, *business*. Here it refers to what Socrates goes around spending his time doing.

[3] *λόγος* is singular in the Greek: literally, “this reputation and story.” And rather than awkwardly repeat “arisen,” we have rendered this second instance of *γίγνομαι* as “come about.”

[4] Literally, “not act rashly concerning you.”

[5] Literally, *ὄνομα* = *name*, and hence something for which one is known, *fame*, *reputation*.

[6] While quite natural in Greek, the *ἀκούετε δή* is very hard to express equally naturally in English: “listen up,” “hark,” and “hear me out” would be as bad as omitting the phrase altogether.

[7] Derived from *παῖς* (*child*), the verb *παίζω* means to be like a child, and hence play games, jest.

[8] At this point in the dialogue, *ἀνθρωπίνη σοφία* is as widely open to interpretation as “human wisdom,” but what Socrates means by this phrase will become more clear as his explanation proceeds.

[9] Gorgias, etc.

[10] The basic sense of *λέγω* is *say*, *speak*, *tell*. In this context it is sometimes translated as “describe,” but “characterize” seems to reproduce the sense of the Greek better than “describe” or “express.”

[11] By this device, Plato let’s us know that the jury was reacting to what Socrates was saying with an audible clamor.

[12] Literally, “but rather I will refer you to one speaking (= telling the story) [who is] worthy of your credence.”

[13] Referring to the 404BC exile of the supporters of democracy during the eight-month reign of The Thirty.

[14] *καὶ δὴ καί*: Denn.: “marking the transition from general to particular.”

[15] Another clamor among the jurors, indicating that the story was well known and that Socrates’s rehearsal of it in court was not well received. But the story is the necessary foundation for what follows.

[16] *οὑτοσί* with a deictic iota: Socrates is actually pointing out Khairephon’s brother among those present at the trial. See the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41. *He* = Khairephon.

(21b) *Σκέψασθε δὴ ὧν ἕνεκα ταῦτα λέγω· μέλλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς διδάξειν ὅθεν μοι ἡ διαβολὴ γέγονεν. ταῦτα γὰρ ἐγὼ ἀκούσας ἐνεθυμούμην οὑτωσί· "τί ποτε λέγει ὁ θεός, καὶ τί ποτε αἰνίττεται; ἐγὼ γὰρ δὴ οὔτε μέγα οὔτε σμικρὸν σύνοιδα ἐμαυτῷ σοφὸς ὤν· τί οὖν ποτε λέγει φάσκων ἐμὲ σοφώτατον εἶναι; οὐ γὰρ δήπου ψεύδεταί γε· οὐ γὰρ θέμις αὐτῷ."* καὶ πολὺν μὲν χρόνον ἠπόρουν τί ποτε λέγει· ἔπειτα μόγις πάνυ ἐπὶ ζήτησιν αὐτοῦ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἐτραπόμην. ἦλθον ἐπί τινα τῶν δοκούντων σοφῶν εἶναι ὡς (21c) ἐναῦθα εἴπερ που ἐλέγξων τὸ μαντεῖον καὶ ἀποφανῶν τῷ χρησμῷ ὅτι "οὑτοσὶ ἐμοῦ σοφώτερός ἐστι, σὺ δ' ἐμὲ ἔφησθα." διασκοπῶν οὖν τοῦτον — ὀνόματι γὰρ οὐδὲν δέομαι λέγειν, ἦν δέ τις τῶν πολιτικῶν πρὸς ὃν ἐγὼ σκοπῶν τοιοῦτόν τι ἔπαθον, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ διαλεγόμενος αὐτῷ — ἔδοξέ μοι οὗτος ὁ ἀνὴρ δοκεῖν μὲν εἶναι σοφὸς ἄλλοις τε πολλοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ μάλιστα ἑαυτῷ, εἶναι δ' οὔ· κἄπειτα ἐπειρώμην αὐτῷ δεικνύναι ὅτι οἴοιτο μὲν εἶναι σοφός, εἴη δ' οὔ. (21d) ἐντεῦθεν οὖν τούτῳ τε ἀπηχθόμην καὶ πολλοῖς τῶν παρόντων· πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν δ' οὖν ἀπιὼν ἐλογιζόμην ὅτι τούτου μὲν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐγὼ σοφώτερός εἰμι· κινδυνεύει μὲν γὰρ ἡμῶν οὐδέτερος οὐδὲν καλὸν κἀγαθὸν εἰδέναι, ἀλλ' οὗτος μὲν οἴεταί τι εἰδέναι οὐκ εἰδώς, ἐγὼ δέ, ὥσπερ οὖν οὐκ οἶδα, οὐδὲ οἴομαι· ἔοικα γοῦν τούτου γε σμικρῷ τινι αὐτῷ τούτῳ σοφώτερος εἶναι, ὅτι ἃ μὴ οἶδα οὐδὲ οἴομαι εἰδέναι. ἐντεῦθεν ἐπ' ἄλλον ἰ᾽ α τῶν ἐκείνου δοκούντων σοφωτέρων εἶναι καί (21e) μοι ταὐτὰ ταῦτα ἔδοξε, καὶ ἐνταῦθα κἀκείνῳ καὶ ἄλλοις πολλοῖς ἀπηχθόμην.*

Consider on what account I say this: for I am about to explain[1] to you whence the prejudice against me has come about. For having heard this I reflected thus: "Whatever does the god mean, and why does he speak in riddles? For I am aware of myself being neither a lot nor a little wise; what then does he mean, declaring me to be wisest? For of course he does not speak falsely, for that would not be just.[2] And for a long time I was at a loss as to what he meant. Then very reluctantly I turned to some such investigation of it: I went to one of the ones seeming to be wise, on the grounds[3] of here, if anywhere, refuting the oracle and demonstrating to it, "This one is wiser than I, but you said I was wisest."[4] Now examining this person — there is no need to name him, but he was one of those involved in public affairs,[5] examining and conversing with whom, men of Athens, I had this sort of an experience: this man seemed to me to seem to many others, and especially to himself, to be wise, but not to be. And then I tried to show to him that he thought himself to be wise, but was not. And thereupon I incurred his animosity and that of many of those present. And going off to myself I reckoned that I was wiser than this man: for neither of us ventured to know anything fine and good,[6] but he thought that he knew something when he did not,[7] while I, just as I did not know, nor yet thought I knew. At any rate I am likely to be wiser than he in this one little respect,[8] that I do not think that I know that which I do not know. Then I went to someone else seeming to be wiser than that person and these same things seemed so to me,[9] and thereupon I incurred his animosity and that of many others.

[1] διδάσκειν = *teach*, but here *explain* better captures the sense.

[2] *Just* does not even begin to reproduce the force of the Greek, but we are at a loss for an English equivalent. οὐ γὰρ θέμις αὐτῷ = "for it is not/would not be θέμις for him." Burnet suggests "lawful," but for θέμις LSJ gives "that which is laid down or established by custom" and hence what is just or right. LSJ further cites equivalence with the Latin *jus* and *fas*, explicitly opposing this to *lex*. The strength of Socrates's assertion cannot be overemphasized: that which is divine can only be true, right, and just.

[3] ὡς expresses his pretext for doing this.

[4] Literally, "but you said me."

[5] By this periphrasis for πολιτικῶν, we have sought to avoid the baggage associated with *politician*. Burnet thinks that Socrates was actually speaking of Anytus. The Greek is somewhat awkward and to at least some degree anacolouthetic, and we have — if more for want of ability than by design — rendered it with commensurate awkwardness.

[6] We again render the common phrase καλὸν κἀγαθόν literally, and throughout this critical passage we adhere more closely to the Greek than is natural in English.

[7] Lit, "not knowing."

[8] σμικρῷ τινι αὐτῷ τούτῳ seems clearly to be a dative of respect rather than a dative of degree of difference ("by this one little [bit]"), and so Burnet also takes it, but see fn.7 on p.20.

[9] That is, that this other person also thought himself to be wise when he was not.

Μετὰ ταῦτ᾽ οὖν ἤδη ἐφεξῆς ἦα, αἰσθανόμενος μὲν καὶ λυπούμενος καὶ δεδιὼς ὅτι ἀπηχθανόμην, ὅμως δὲ ἀναγκαῖον ἐδόκει εἶναι τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ περὶ πλείστου ποιεῖσθαι — ἰτέον οὖν σκοποῦντι τὸν χρησμὸν τί λέγει, ἐπὶ ἅπαντας τούς τι (22a) *δοκοῦντας εἰδέναι. καὶ νὴ τὸν κύνα, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι — δεῖ γὰρ πρὸς ὑμᾶς τἀληθῆ λέγειν — ἦ μὴν ἐγὼ ἔπαθόν τι τοιοῦτον· οἱ μὲν μάλιστα εὐδοκιμοῦντες ἔδοξάν μοι ὀλίγου δεῖν τοῦ πλείστου ἐνδεεῖς εἶναι ζητοῦντι κατὰ τὸν θεόν, ἄλλοι δὲ δοκοῦντες φαυλότεροι ἐπιεικέστεροι εἶναι ἄνδρες πρὸς τὸ φρονίμως ἔχειν. δεῖ δὴ ὑμῖν τὴν ἐμὴν πλάνην ἐπιδεῖξαι ὥσπερ πόνους τινὰς πονοῦντος ἵνα μοι καὶ ἀνέλεγκτος ἡ μαντεία γένοιτο. μετὰ γὰρ τοὺς πολιτικοὺς ἦα ἐπὶ τοὺς ποιητὰς τούς τε τῶν τραγῳδιῶν καὶ τοὺς τῶν* (22b) *διθυράμβων καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους, ὡς ἐνταῦθα ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ καταληψόμενος ἐμαυτὸν ἀμαθέστερον ἐκείνων ὄντα. ἀναλαμβάνων οὖν αὐτῶν τὰ ποιήματα ἃ μοι ἐδόκει μάλιστα πεπραγματεῦσθαι αὐτοῖς, διηρώτων ἂν αὐτοὺς τί λέγοιεν, ἵν᾽ ἅμα τι καὶ μανθάνοιμι παρ᾽ αὐτῶν. αἰσχύνομαι οὖν ὑμῖν εἰπεῖν, ὦ ἄνδρες, τἀληθῆ· ὅμως δὲ ῥητέον. ὡς ἔπος γὰρ εἰπεῖν ὀλίγου αὐτῶν ἅπαντες οἱ παρόντες ἂν βέλτιον ἔλεγον περὶ ὧν αὐτοὶ ἐπεποιήκεσαν. ἔγνων οὖν αὖ καὶ περὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τοῦτο, ὅτι οὐ σοφίᾳ ποιοῖεν* (22c) *ἃ ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ καὶ ἐνθουσιάζοντες ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ οἱ χρησμῳδοί· καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ καὶ καλά, ἴσασιν δὲ οὐδὲν ὧν λέγουσι. τοιοῦτόν τί μοι ἐφάνησαν πάθος καὶ οἱ ποιηταὶ πεπονθότες, καὶ ἅμα ἠσθόμην αὐτῶν διὰ τὴν ποίησιν οἰομένων καὶ τἆλλα σοφωτάτων εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ἃ οὐκ ἦσαν. ἀπῇα οὖν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν τῷ αὐτῷ οἰόμενος περιγεγονέναι ᾧπερ καὶ τῶν πολιτικῶν.*

Now immediately after this I went in succession,[1] perceiving with sorrow and apprehension[2] that I was incurring animosity, but nevertheless it seemed necessary to accord the highest respect to the oracle of the god[3] — it was necessary that I, as I examined what the oracle meant, go to all those seeming to know anything. And by the dog,[4] men of Athens — for it is necessary to tell you the truth — truly my experience was this:[5] those especially well-reputed seemed to me, in my search on behalf of the god,[6] to be little short of being the most lacking, and others of lower regard to be more estimable men with respect to being wise. I have indeed to recount for you my journey and labors, all only to prove the oracle irrefutable.[7] For after those involved in public affairs, I went to the poets, those of tragedies and dithyrambs and the others, on the grounds[8] of here catching myself red-handed being more obtuse than they. Taking up the poetry that they seemed to me to have most carefully crafted, I asked them what it meant, so that at the same I might learn from them. Now, I am ashamed, men, to tell the truth, yet it must be told: virtually[9] all those present had better things to say[10] about what they themselves had written. Now in turn I quickly recognized this as well about the poets, that they did not compose what they composed by wisdom, but by some natural ability[11] and by being inspired just like the seers and oracles: for they[12] also said many good things,[13] but understood nothing of which they spoke. To me the poets seemed to have had a similar experience, and at the same time I perceived that on account of their poetry they thought themselves wisest with respect to other things when they were not.[14] So I went away also from there thinking myself better off in the same way that I was better off than those involved in public affairs.[15]

[1]The narrative that would have begun with this clause is lost as the focus of Socrates's thoughts shifts in the next clause. It resumes, with some anacolouthon, with *ἰτέον*.

[2]We here use Burnet's excellent suggestion for the translation of the somewhat awkward *αἰσθανόμενος … καὶ λυπούμενος καὶ δεδιὼς* (literally, "perceiving and being grieved and fearing").

[3]Or "esteem most highly the [oracle/errand/mission] of the god." The noun with the *τό* in *τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ* is left unexpressed and to be inferred from context. The idea is clearly that Socrates was morally obligated to pursue his investigation of the meaning of the oracle regardless of the personal cost.

[4]A common expression, politer than "by Zeus."

[5]Literally, "I suffered some such [experience]." Where English tends to use a generic verb with a specific object ("make a big decision," "have a good experience"), Greek tends to use a specific verb with a generic object ("decide a big [thing]," "experience a good [thing]").

[6]*κατά* can mean with the favor of a god, but here has the sense "in accordance with [the oracle of] the god."

[7]We have taken great license in order to reproduce the sense of the Greek. Literally, "it is indeed necessary for me to point out my journey (wandering) just as the labors of one laboring, in order that (*ἵνα*) the oracle become even irrefutable for (by) me." The *ἵνα* clause, which expresses purpose, not result, is ironic: Socrates's efforts to disprove the oracle ironically end up proving it. *Indeed* for *δή* is a bit formal, but *really* seemed too colloquial.

[8]*ὡς* expresses his pretext for doing this.

[9]*Virtually*: see fn.3 on p.2.

[10]Literally, "spoke better."

[11]Literally, "by some nature."

[12]The seers and oracles.

[13]Literally, "many and good things": Greek tends to link quantifying adjectives by *καί* (*and*) where English would not.

[14]Literally, "with respect to other things with respect to which they were not." One is tangentially reminded of Paul Dirac's observation, "In science one tries to tell people, in such a way as to be understood by everyone, something that no one ever knew before. But in poetry, it's the exact opposite."

[15]"From there": from the company of the poets. Literally, "thinking myself to surpass [the poets] in the same respect in which [I surpassed] also those involved in public affairs," but *surpass*, *be superior to*, *excel* and the like seemed too strong and inconsistent with the humility of *σμικρῷ τινι αὐτῷ τούτῳ* ("in this one little respect") of (21d). But see fn.8 on p.8 and fn.7 on p.20.

Τελευτῶν οὖν ἐπὶ τοὺς χειροτέχνας ἦα· ἐμαυτῷ γὰρ (22d) συνῄδη οὐδὲν ἐπισταμένῳ ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, τούτους δέ γ' ἤδη ὅτι εὑρήσοιμι πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ ἐπισταμένους. καὶ τούτου μὲν οὐκ ἐψεύσθην, ἀλλ' ἠπίσταντο ἃ ἐγὼ οὐκ ἠπιστάμην καί μου ταύτῃ σοφώτεροι ἦσαν. ἀλλ' ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ταὐτόν μοι ἔδοξαν ἔχειν ἁμάρτημα ὅπερ καὶ οἱ ποιηταὶ καὶ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ δημιουργοί – διὰ τὸ τὴν τέχνην καλῶς ἐξεργάζεσθαι ἕκαστος ἠξίου καὶ τἆλλα τὰ μέγιστα σοφώτατος εἶναι – καὶ αὐτῶν αὕτη ἡ πλημμέλεια ἐκείνην τὴν σοφίαν (22e) ἀποκρύπτειν· ὥστε με ἐμαυτὸν ἀνερωτᾶν ὑπὲρ τοῦ χρησμοῦ πότερα δεξαίμην ἂν οὕτως ὥσπερ ἔχω ἔχειν, μήτε τι σοφὸς ὢν τὴν ἐκείνων σοφίαν μήτε ἀμαθὴς τὴν ἀμαθίαν, ἢ ἀμφότερα ἃ ἐκεῖνοι ἔχουσιν ἔχειν. ἀπεκρινάμην οὖν ἐμαυτῷ καὶ τῷ χρησμῷ ὅτι μοι λυσιτελοῖ ὥσπερ ἔχω ἔχειν.

Finally I went to the craftsman, for I was aware that I knew virtually[1] nothing, but knew that I would find them understanding many good things. And I was not deceived: they knew many good things that I did not and were wiser than I in that respect. But, men of Athens, our good friends the workmen[2] seemed to me to have the same fault as the poets — each, having well refined his skill, deemed himself wisest with respect to other great things[3] — , and this off-key note[4] of theirs hid that wisdom, so that I asked myself on behalf of the oracle whether I would rather be just as I am, being neither wise in the way that they were wise nor lacking wisdom in the way that they lacked wisdom, or to have both their wisdom and lack of wisdom.[5] And I answered to myself and to the oracle that I was better off just as I am.

Ἐκ ταυτησὶ δὴ τῆς ἐξετάσεως, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, (23a) πολλαὶ μὲν ἀπέχθειαί μοι γεγόνασι καὶ οἷαι χαλεπώταται καὶ βαρύταται, ὥστε πολλὰς διαβολὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν γεγονέναι, ὄνομα δὲ τοῦτο λέγεσθαι, σοφὸς εἶναι· οἴονται γάρ με ἑκάστοτε οἱ παρόντες ταῦτα αὐτὸν εἶναι σοφὸν ἃ ἂν ἄλλον ἐξελέγξω. τὸ δὲ κινδυνεύει, ὦ ἄνδρες, τῷ ὄντι ὁ θεὸς σοφὸς εἶναι καὶ ἐν τῷ χρησμῷ τούτῳ τοῦτο λέγειν, ὅτι ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη σοφία ὀλίγου τινὸς ἀξία ἐστὶν καὶ οὐδενός. καὶ φαίνεται τοῦτον λέγειν τὸν Σωκράτη, προσκεχρῆσθαι δὲ (23b) τῷ ἐμῷ ὀνόματι, ἐμὲ παράδειγμα ποιούμενος, ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ εἴποι ὅτι "οὗτος ὑμῶν, ὦ ἄνθρωποι, σοφώτατός ἐστιν, ὅστις ὥσπερ Σωκράτης ἔγνωκεν ὅτι οὐδενὸς ἄξιός ἐστι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πρὸς σοφίαν." ταῦτ' οὖν ἐγὼ μὲν ἔτι καὶ νῦν περιιὼν ζητῶ καὶ ἐρευνῶ κατὰ τὸν θεὸν καὶ τῶν ἀστῶν καὶ ξένων ἄν τινα οἴωμαι σοφὸν εἶναι· καὶ ἐπειδάν μοι μὴ δοκῇ, τῷ θεῷ βοηθῶν ἐνδείκνυμαι ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι σοφός. καὶ ὑπὸ ταύτης τῆς ἀσχολίας οὔτε τι τῶν τῆς πόλεως πρᾶξαί μοι σχολὴ γέγονεν ἄξιον λόγου οὔτε τῶν οἰκείων, ἀλλ' ἐν (23c) πενίᾳ μυρίᾳ εἰμὶ διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ λατρείαν.

Out of this investigation, men of Athens, there arose many enmities of the sort most hard to deal with and most grievous,[6] such that many prejudices arose from them, and this reputation of being wise:[7] for those present on any given occasion think that I myself am wise with respect to those things in which I refute someone else. But in fact, men, it is likely that the god is wise, and is saying this in this oracle, that human wisdom is worth little or nothing.[8] And he appears to name this Socrates, and in addition to have used my name,[9] to make me an example, just as if he were to say, "This one among you, men,[10] is wisest, whoever just as Socrates recognizes that he is in truth worth nothing with regard to wisdom."[11] So still even now I go around seeking and putting to the test on behalf of the god[12] any of my townsmen or out-of-town visitors I think to be wise. And whenever he does not seem so to me, assisting the god I point out that he is not wise. And because of this vocation[13] I have not had leisure worth mentioning to attend to any of the affairs of the city or of my household, but am in great poverty on account of my service to the god.

[1] *Virtually*: see fn.3 on p.2. Here and in what follows, ἐπίσταμαι is used both in the general sense of *knowing, understanding* and, for the craftsmen, the sense of *having know-how.*

[2] οἱ ἀγαθοὶ δημιουργοί: the ἀγαθοὶ does not mean good as opposed to bad or less capable in their trades; it is ironic, and to reproduce this irony in English we have used Burnet's suggested "[our] good [friends]."

[3] Literally, "other greatest things."

[4] πλημμέλεια: the substantive for out-of-tune or off-key. Cp. ἐμμελῶς (*tunefully*) in (20c).

[5] Literally, "neither being at all wise with respect to their wisdom, nor ignorant with respect to their ignorance, or to have both that they had." In this context, ἀμαθία (*ignorance*) functions as the antonym of σοφία (*wisdom*).

[6] Literally, "heaviest."

[7] ὥστε with the infinitive connotes natural, rather than actual, result (though here the result was both natural and actual): the enmities were of a sort that would naturally give rise to such prejudices. Literally, "this to be said [as] a name, to be wise," meaning that this is how he came to be spoken of as wise in a pejorative sense.

[8] Literally, "worth something little καί nothing": καί most usually = *and* or *even*, but it has other uses, and in particular in this sort of quantitative construct = *or* (Smythe §2870).

[9] That is, to have singled out Socrates by saying in the oracle that Socrates was wisest. The two clauses are repeating very nearly this same idea.

[10] The word for *men* is here ἄνθρωποι, which can also have the sense of *humans* (a sense not present in the more concrete ἄνδρες (*men*) in ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι).

[11] We have chosen to render this critical statement literally. A less literal translation might be "that his wisdom is worthless/of no worth."

[12] See fn.6 on p.9.

[13] ἀσχολία, like the Latin *negotium*, has the root sense of *want of leisure*, and hence *occupation, business.* We have chosen *vocation* over these and *avocation* to reflect that Socrates does this, not to earn a living, but on behalf of the oracle (as he says in the very next line with λατρείαν).

Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις οἱ νέοι μοι ἐπακολουθοῦντες — οἷς μάλιστα σχολή ἐστιν, οἱ τῶν πλουσιωτάτων — αὐτόματοι, χαίρουσιν ἀκούοντες ἐξεταζομένων τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ αὐτοὶ πολλάκις ἐμὲ μιμοῦνται, εἶτα ἐπιχειροῦσιν ἄλλους ἐξετάζειν· κἄπειτα οἶμαι εὑρίσκουσι πολλὴν ἀφθονίαν οἰομένων μὲν εἰδέναι τι ἀνθρώπων εἰδότων δὲ ὀλίγα ἢ οὐδέν. ἐντεῦθεν οὖν οἱ ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν ἐξεταζόμενοι ἐμοὶ ὀργίζονται, οὐχ αὑτοῖς, (23d) *καὶ λέγουσιν ὡς Σωκράτης τίς ἐστι μιαρώτατος καὶ διαφθείρει τοὺς νέους· καὶ ἐπειδάν τις αὐτοὺς ἐρωτᾷ ὅτι ποιῶν καὶ ὅτι διδάσκων, ἔχουσι μὲν οὐδὲν εἰπεῖν ἀλλ᾽ ἀγνοοῦσιν, ἵνα δὲ μὴ δοκῶσιν ἀπορεῖν, τὰ κατὰ πάντων τῶν φιλοσοφούντων πρόχειρα ταῦτα λέγουσιν ὅτι "τὰ μετέωρα καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς" καὶ "θεοὺς μὴ νομίζειν" καὶ "τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν." τὰ γὰρ ἀληθῆ οἶμαι οὐκ ἂν ἐθέλοιεν λέγειν, ὅτι κατάδηλοι γίγνονται προσποιούμενοι μὲν εἰδέναι, εἰδότες δὲ οὐδέν. ἅτε οὖν οἶμαι φιλότιμοι* (23e) *ὄντες καὶ σφοδροὶ καὶ πολλοί, καὶ συντεταμένως καὶ πιθανῶς λέγοντες περὶ ἐμοῦ, ἐμπεπλήκασιν ὑμῶν τὰ ὦτα καὶ πάλαι καὶ σφοδρῶς διαβάλλοντες. ἐκ τούτων καὶ Μέλητός μοι ἐπέθετο καὶ Ἄνυτος καὶ Λύκων, Μέλητος μὲν ὑπὲρ τῶν ποιητῶν ἀχθόμενος, Ἄνυτος δὲ ὑπὲρ τῶν δημιουργῶν καὶ* (24a) *τῶν πολιτικῶν, Λύκων δὲ ὑπὲρ τῶν ῥητόρων· ὥστε, ὅπερ ἀρχόμενος ἐγὼ ἔλεγον, θαυμάζοιμ᾽ ἂν εἰ οἷός τ᾽ εἴην ἐγὼ ὑμῶν ταύτην τὴν διαβολὴν ἐξελέσθαι ἐν οὕτως ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ οὕτω πολλὴν γεγονυῖαν. ταῦτ᾽ ἔστιν ὑμῖν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τἀληθῆ, καὶ ὑμᾶς οὔτε μέγα οὔτε μικρὸν ἀποκρυψάμενος ἐγὼ λέγω οὐδ᾽ ὑποστειλάμενος. καίτοι οἶδα σχεδὸν ὅτι αὐτοῖς τούτοις ἀπεχθάνομαι,* (24b) *ὃ καὶ τεκμήριον ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγω καὶ ὅτι αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ διαβολὴ ἡ ἐμὴ καὶ τὰ αἴτια ταῦτά ἐστιν. καὶ ἐάντε νῦν ἐάντε αὖθις ζητήσητε ταῦτα, οὕτως εὑρήσετε.*

In addition to this, the young men — the ones who have the most leisure, those of the wealthy — following me of their own accord, enjoy listening to the men being examined, and often they themselves imitate me, then try to examine others:[1] and then I suppose they find a great abundance of men who think that they know something but know little or nothing. Now, the ones being examined thereupon grow angry at me, not at themselves, and they say that some Socrates is a most disgusting person and corrupts the young. And whenever anyone asks them, doing what and teaching what, they don't know and are not able to say anything, but lest they seem to be at a loss, they say these commonplace things against all philosophers,[2] "things in the heavens and under the earth" and "does not worship gods" and "makes the weaker argument the stronger." For I think they would not want to tell the truth, that they have been clearly exposed pretending to know, but knowing nothing. And I suppose since they are numerous and vehement and jealous of their honor,[3] and have talked about me strenuously and persuasively, they have filled your ears, maligning me vehemently and for a long time already. And based on this Meletus and Anytus and Lycon attacked me, Meletus being aggrieved on behalf of the poets, Anytus on behalf of the craftsmen and those involved in public affairs, and Lycon on behalf of the orators, so that, which very thing I was saying at the beginning, I should wonder if I were able to wrest[4] from you in so short a time this prejudice that has become so great. This is, men of Athens, the truth, and I speak hiding nothing either great or small from you, nor yet furling my sails.[5] And yet I know well that by this very candidness I am incurring enmity,[6] which is also a sure sign that I am speaking the truth and that this is the prejudice against me and these the causes. And whether now or hereafter you look into these things, you will find them so.

[1]This seems to mean that the young men first imitate the questioning of Socrates among themselves, then try questioning others.

[2]Greek uses *ὅτι* even before direct quotes, and the quoted material that follows is just sentence fragments from the Aristophanic caricature cited earlier in the dialogue.

[3]*φιλότιμοι* has the literal root sense of *honor-loving*, here in a pejorative sense of being haughtily conscious of their stature among their fellows.

[4]Literally, simply "take."

[5]The *ὑμᾶς* is governed by *ἀποκρυψάμενος*. Furling sails was a common metaphor for telling distorted or half truths.

[6]Literally, "I am incurring enmity by these very things," referring to his speaking the truth plainly and directly.

Περὶ μὲν οὖν ὧν οἱ πρῶτοί μου κατήγοροι κατηγόρουν αὕτη ἔστω ἱκανὴ ἀπολογία πρὸς ὑμᾶς· πρὸς δὲ Μέλητον τὸν ἀγαθὸν καὶ φιλόπολιν, ὥς φησι, καὶ τοὺς ὑστέρους μετὰ ταῦτα πειράσομαι ἀπολογήσασθαι. αὖθις γὰρ δή, ὥσπερ ἑτέρων τούτων ὄντων κατηγόρων, λάβωμεν αὖ τὴν τούτων ἀντωμοσίαν. ἔχει δέ πως ὧδε· Σωκράτη φησὶν ἀδικεῖν τούς τε νέους διαφθείροντα καὶ θεοὺς οὓς ἡ πόλις (24c) *νομίζει οὐ νομίζοντα, ἕτερα δὲ δαιμόνια καινά. τὸ μὲν δὴ ἔγκλημα τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν· τούτου δὲ τοῦ ἐγκλήματος ἓν ἕκαστον ἐξετάσωμεν.*

Now concerning the accusations that my first accusers made against me, let this be a sufficient defense before you. And with regard to the good and patriotic Meletus, as he claims, and my later accusers, I will next[7] try to make a defense. Again, let us take up their complaint just as if these were another set of accusers:[8] It is something like this: he says Socrates to do wrong by corrupting the young and not worshipping the gods that the city worships, but rather practicing other novel rites.[9] The charge is some such; let us examine each part of this charge.

[7]Literally, "after this."

[8]The first set being the earlier accusers he has just dealt with. Literally, "just as of these ones being other accusers." *ἀντωμοσία* is the legal technical term for a sworn complaint against a defendant; Socrates is here distilling the actual complaint down to its true essence.

[9]The meaning of *δαιμόνια* is critically important but unfortunately not easy to discern precisely. Burnet makes a compelling argument that *δαιμόνια καινά* cannot be taken to mean "strange/novel divinities" and that, used as it is here, *δαιμόνια* rather refers to religious rites or practices. Though it is not present in the Greek, we have accordingly added "practicing" as carrying over the sense of *νομίζοντα* (*worshipping*) to "other novel rites." See fn.7 on p.3.

Φησὶ γὰρ δὴ τοὺς νέους ἀδικεῖν με διαφθείροντα. ἐγὼ δέ γε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἀδικεῖν φημι Μέλητον, ὅτι σπουδῇ χαριεντίζεται, ῥᾳδίως εἰς ἀγῶνα καθιστὰς ἀνθρώπους, περὶ πραγμάτων προσποιούμενος σπουδάζειν καὶ κήδεσθαι ὧν οὐδὲν τούτῳ πώποτε ἐμέλησεν· ὡς δὲ τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχει, πειράσομαι καὶ ὑμῖν ἐπιδεῖξαι. καί μοι δεῦρο, ὦ Μέλητε, εἰπέ· ἄλλο τι ἢ (24d) *περὶ πλείστου ποιῇ ὅπως ὡς βέλτιστοι οἱ νεώτεροι ἔσονται;*

He says that I do wrong by corrupting the young. But I, men of Athens, say that Meletus does wrong, that he jests in earnest, lightly summoning men to court, pretending to be serious and care about matters none of which were ever a concern to him. And that this is so, I will try to show also to you. Come, Meletus, tell me:[1] you value mostly highly how the young will become their best, don't you?[2]

[1]Socrates now proceeds to interrogate Meletus (under oath, as later becomes clear). One is reminded of Clarence Darrow cross examining William Jennings Bryan at the Scopes trial, with the same result (and several other parallels between the two trials). Throughout this first part of the interrogation, there is a play on the name *Μέλητος* and the various forms of the verb *μέλει* (*be a concern*) that is impossible to carry over into English.

[2]Literally, "is it anything other than you value mostly highly how the younger will be as good as possible." The comparative *νεώτεροι* (*younger*) is effectively synonymous with *νέοι* (*young*).

Ἔγωγε.

I do indeed.[3]

[3]*ἔγωγε* is the emphatic form of the first-person pronoun *ἔγω* (*I*). Although there are Greek words for *yes* and *no*, as an "echo language" Greek prefers to repeat a word or phrase from the question, especially in affirmative replies. This will occur frequently in Socrates's interrogation of Meletus.

Ἴθι δή νυν εἰπὲ τούτοις, τίς αὐτοὺς βελτίους ποιεῖ; δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι οἶσθα, μέλον γέ σοι. τὸν μὲν γὰρ διαφθείροντα ἐξευρών, ὡς φῄς, ἐμέ, εἰσάγεις τουτοισὶ καὶ κατηγορεῖς· τὸν δὲ δὴ βελτίους ποιοῦντα ἴθι εἰπὲ καὶ μήνυσον αὐτοῖς τίς ἐστιν. — ὁρᾷς, ὦ Μέλητε, ὅτι σιγᾷς καὶ οὐκ ἔχεις εἰπεῖν; καίτοι οὐκ αἰσχρόν σοι δοκεῖ εἶναι καὶ ἱκανὸν τεκμήριον οὗ δὴ ἐγὼ λέγω, ὅτι σοι οὐδὲν μεμέληκεν; ἀλλ' εἰπέ, ὠγαθέ, τίς αὐτοὺς ἀμείνους ποιεῖ;

Come now, tell these ones, who makes them better?[4] For it is clear that you know, it being a concern to you. For, having found out the one corrupting them — me, as you claim — you summon me before these ones and accuse me. But tell who makes them better and inform them who he is. — You see, Meletus, that you are silent and unable to say? And yet does it not seem to you to be shameful and a sufficient proof of what I say, that it has not at all been a concern to you? But do tell, my good man, who makes them better?

[4]Though it sounds a bit unsophisticated in English, we have throughout chosen to translate the Greek literally with "make them better/worse." *ἀγαθός* (*good*) has multiple comparatives and superlatives; throughout Socrates uses the comparative *βελτίων* (superlative *βέλτιστος*), which means *better morally, virtuous.*

Οἱ νόμοι.

The laws.

(24e) *Ἀλλ' οὐ τοῦτο ἐρωτῶ, ὦ βέλτιστε, ἀλλὰ τίς ἄνθρωπος, ὅστις πρῶτον καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο οἶδε, τοὺς νόμους;*

But I did not ask this, my good man,[5] but what person[6] — who first knows this very thing, the laws?

[5]The vocative *ὦ βέλτιστε* (literally, "best of men") is very much the Greek equivalent of the English "my good man."

[6]*ἄνθρωπος* is *man* in the sense of *human*; as the contrast is here with an abstraction like "the laws," we have used "person."

Οὗτοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, οἱ δικασταί.

These ones, Socrates, the jurors.

Πῶς λέγεις, ὦ Μέλητε; οἵδε τοὺς νέους παιδεύειν οἷοί τέ εἰσι καὶ βελτίους ποιοῦσιν;

How do you mean, Meletus? These ones are able to teach the young and make them better?

Μάλιστα.

Certainly.

Πότερον ἅπαντες, ἢ οἱ μὲν αὐτῶν, οἱ δ' οὔ;

All, or only some of them, and not others?

Ἅπαντες.

All.

Εὖ γε νὴ τὴν Ἥραν λέγεις καὶ πολλὴν ἀφθονίαν τῶν ὠφελούντων. τί δὲ δή; οἱ δὲ ἀκροαταὶ βελτίους ποιοῦσιν (25a) *ἢ οὔ;*

By Hera, you bear good news of a great abundance of benefactors.[7] But what then? Does the audience make them better or not?

[7]Literally, "you speak well and of an abundance . . . ."

Καὶ οὗτοι.

Also these.

Τί δέ, οἱ βουλευταί;

What then, the councilmen?[8]

[8]The *βουλευταί* were the 500 members of the governing council known as the *βουλή*.

Καὶ οἱ βουλευταί.

Also the councilmen.

Ἀλλ' ἄρα, ὦ Μέλητε, μὴ οἱ ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, οἱ ἐκκλησιασταί, διαφθείρουσι τοὺς νεωτέρους; ἢ κἀκεῖνοι βελτίους ποιοῦσιν ἅπαντες;

But then, Meletus, those in the assembly, the assemblymen, they do not corrupt the young? Or do all those ones make them better?[9]

[9]The *ἐκκλησία* was an assembly of all the citizens, with attendance typically over 5000. If you didn't see it before, you can now see where this is going. *μή* (rather than *οὐ*) is used because a negative answer is expected (Smythe §2651).

Κἀκεῖνοι.

They, too.

Πάντες ἄρα ὡς ἔοικεν, Ἀθηναῖοι καλοὺς κἀγαθοὺς ποιοῦσι πλὴν ἐμοῦ, ἐγὼ δὲ μόνος διαφθείρω. οὕτω λέγεις;

Then, as is likely, all Athenians make them better except me, and I alone corrupt them. Say you so?

Πάνυ σφόδρα ταῦτα λέγω.

I very much say this.

Πολλήν γέ μου κατέγνωκας δυστυχίαν. καί μοι ἀπόκριναι· ἦ καὶ περὶ ἵππους οὕτω σοι δοκεῖ ἔχειν; οἱ μὲν (25b) *βελτίους ποιοῦντες αὐτοὺς πάντες ἄνθρωποι εἶναι, εἷς δέ τις ὁ διαφθείρων; ἢ τοὐναντίον τούτου πᾶν εἷς μέν τις ὁ βελτίους οἷός τ' ὢν ποιεῖν ἢ πάνυ ὀλίγοι, οἱ ἱππικοί, οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ ἐάνπερ συνῶσι καὶ χρῶνται ἵπποις, διαφθείρουσιν; οὐχ οὕτως ἔχει, ὦ Μέλητε, καὶ περὶ ἵππων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἁπάντων ζῴων; πάντως δήπου, ἐάντε σὺ καὶ Ἄνυτος οὐ φῆτε ἐάντε φῆτε. πολλὴ γὰρ ἂν τις εὐδαιμονία εἴη περὶ τοὺς νέους εἰ εἷς μὲν μόνος αὐτοὺς διαφθείρει, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι* (25c) *ὠφελοῦσιν. ἀλλὰ γάρ, ὦ Μέλητε, ἱκανῶς ἐπιδείκνυσαι ὅτι οὐδεπώποτε ἐφρόντισας τῶν νέων, καὶ σαφῶς ἀποφαίνεις τὴν σαυτοῦ ἀμέλειαν, ὅτι οὐδέν σοι μεμέληκεν περὶ ὧν ἐμὲ εἰσάγεις.*

You lay a great misfortune upon me.[10] But answer this for me:[11] does it seem so to you also concerning horses? That those making them better are all men, but some single person corrupts them? Or altogether the opposite of this, that some single person, or a very few, are able to make them better — the horse trainers — , but the majority, if they have anything to do with or handle horses,[12] corrupt them? Is it not so, Meletus, concerning both horses and all other animals?[13] Of course[14] it is, whether you and Anytus say so or not. For it would be a great good fortune with regard to the young if a single person corrupts them, and the rest benefit them. But to be sure, Meletus, you show well enough that you never yet thought about the young at all,[15] and you clearly expose your lack of concern, that nothing concerning which you summon me here has been a concern to you.[16]

[10]LSJ *καταγιγνώσκω* I: *remark*, *observe*, and hence of recognizing or recognizing in. It can also have the sense of bringing a criminal charge against someone, but here has the former sense: of Meletus having recognized in Socrates the great misfortune of being the only one to make the young worse.

[11]Literally, "and answer for me" or "and make answer to me."

[12]Literally, "associate with or use horses."

[13]And here we have *οὐ* rather than *μή* because an affirmative reply is expected.

[14]Literally, "altogether of course": it is very emphatic.

[15]We have added "at all" for additional emphasis of the "never yet": Greek has three progressively more emphatic words for never: *οὔποτε, οὐδέποτε, οὐδεπώποτε*.

[16]In just this last sentence, there are plays of two forms of the verb *μέλει* (*be a concern*) with the name *Μέλητος*.

Ἔτι δὲ ἡμῖν εἰπέ, ὦ πρὸς Διὸς Μέλητε πότερόν ἐστιν οἰκεῖν ἄμεινον ἐν πολίταις χρηστοῖς ἢ πονηροῖς; ὦ τάν, ἀπόκριναι· οὐδὲν γάρ τοι χαλεπὸν ἐρωτῶ. οὐχ οἱ μὲν πονηροὶ κακόν τι ἐργάζονται τοὺς ἀεὶ ἐγγυτάτω αὑτῶν ὄντας, οἱ δ' ἀγαθοὶ ἀγαθόν τι;

But further, tell us, my good Meletus,[17] whether it is better to dwell among worthy or wicked citizens?[18] Good sir, answer: for I ask nothing difficult. Do not the wicked work some ill on those nearest them at any given time, and the good some good?

[17]*πρὸς Διὸς* (*by/before Zeus*) with the vocative is equivalent to "my good" in English and has no significance beyond that.

[18]*Better* here being *ἀμείνων*, another comparative of *ἀγαθός*, one with a generic sense. *χρηστός* has the basic sense *serviceable*, *good of its kind*, which then comes to mean *good* in a moral sense and, used of persons, *good*, *honest*, *worthy*. *πονηρός* could be considered its antonym: *toilsome*, *grievous*; *useless*, *good-for-nothing*; used of persons, *bad* in a moral sense.

Πάνυ γε.

Certainly.

(25d) *Ἔστιν οὖν ὅστις βούλεται ὑπὸ τῶν συνόντων βλάπτεσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ ὠφελεῖσθαι; ἀποκρίνου, ὦ ἀγαθέ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ νόμος κελεύει ἀποκρίνεσθαι. ἔσθ' ὅστις βούλεται βλάπτεσθαι;*

Now, is there anyone who wishes to receive ill rather than good treatment at the hands of those around him?[19] Answer, my good man, for the law commands you to answer. Is there anyone who wishes to be harmed?

[19]Literally, "be harmed rather than benefitted by . . . ."

Οὐ δῆτα.

Of course not.

Φέρε δή, πότερον ἐμὲ εἰσάγεις δεῦρο ὡς διαφθείροντα τοὺς νέους καὶ πονηροτέρους ποιοῦντα ἑκόντα ἢ ἄκοντα;

Come now, do you summon me here on the grounds of my corrupting the young and making them morally worse[20] voluntarily or involuntarily?[21]

[20]Here we render the comparative of *πονηρός* as "morally worse."

[21]Throughout, the Greek uses *ἑκων* and *ἄκων*, which strictly should be translated as *willingly* and *unwillingly* or *voluntarily* and *involuntarily*. In this context, these words seem also to have a sense of acting with or without knowledge of the consequences or even with or without intention, and in fact immediately below there is an expression of the Socratic/Platonic doctrine that those who know better, do better. To reflect this, we have chosen to render *ἑκων* and *ἄκων* variously as *voluntarily* and *involuntarily* or, though it could be argued going too far, as *wittingly* and *unwittingly*.

Ἑκόντα ἔγωγε.

Voluntarily.[22]

[22]Literally, "[On the grounds that you do so] voluntarily, I [summon you here]." *ἔγωγε* is the emphatic form of the first-person pronoun *ἐγώ* (*I*).

Τί δῆτα, ὦ Μέλητε; τοσοῦτον σὺ ἐμοῦ σοφώτερος εἶ τηλικούτου ὄντος τηλικόσδε ὤν, ὥστε σὺ μὲν ἔγνωκας ὅτι οἱ μὲν κακοὶ κακόν τι ἐργάζονται ἀεὶ τοὺς μάλιστα πλησίον (25e) ἑαυτῶν, οἱ δὲ ἀγαθοὶ ἀγαθόν, ἐγὼ δὲ δὴ εἰς τοσοῦτον ἀμαθίας ἥκω ὥστε καὶ τοῦτ' ἀγνοῶ, ὅτι ἐάν τινα μοχθηρὸν ποιήσω τῶν συνόντων, κινδυνεύσω κακόν τι λαβεῖν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, ὥστε τοῦτο τὸ τοσοῦτον κακὸν ἑκὼν ποιῶ, ὡς φῂς σύ; ταῦτα ἐγώ σοι οὐ πείθομαι, ὦ Μέλητε, οἶμαι δὲ οὐδὲ ἄλλον ἀνθρώπων οὐδένα· ἀλλ' ἢ οὐ διαφθείρω, ἢ εἰ διαφθείρω (26a) ἄκων, ὥστε σύ γε κατ' ἀμφότερα ψεύδῃ. εἰ δὲ ἄκων διαφθείρω, τῶν τοιούτων [καὶ ἀκουσίων] ἁμαρτημάτων οὐ δεῦρο νόμος εἰσάγειν ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ ἰδίᾳ λαβόντα διδάσκειν καὶ νουθετεῖν· δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν μάθω, παύσομαι ὅ γε ἄκων ποιῶ. σὺ δὲ συγγενέσθαι μέν μοι καὶ διδάξαι ἔφυγες καὶ οὐκ ἠθέλησας, δεῦρο δὲ εἰσάγεις, οἷ νόμος ἐστὶν εἰσάγειν τοὺς κολάσεως δεομένους ἀλλ' οὐ μαθήσεως.

What then, Meletus? Are you at your age so much wiser than I at my age, that you observe that bad persons work some ill on those around them[23] at any given time, and the good some good, while I have come to such great ignorance that I do not know even this, that if I make someone of those around me wicked, I will run the risk of receiving some ill at his hands, so that I wittingly do such a great evil[24] as this, as you say? In this I am not persuaded by you, Meletus, nor do I think any other person is: rather, either I do not corrupt, or if I do corrupt, it is unwittingly, so that either way you are lying.[25] And if I corrupt unwittingly, it is not the law to summon me[26] here for such missteps,[27] but rather taking me aside privately to instruct and admonish: for it is clear that if I learn, I will cease that which I do unwittingly. But you shrunk from and refused to talk to me[28] and instruct me, and summon me here, whither it is the law to summon those in need of punishment, not those in need of instruction.

[23]Literally, "the ones especially near themselves."

[24]Literally, "this so great a bad thing." *κακός* is *bad* in a generic sense.

[25]*ψεύδομαι* spans the senses *deceive*, *speak falsely*, *lie*. We have chosen *lying* as better reflecting the aggressiveness of Socrates's interrogation of Meletus than the more neutral *speaking falsely*.

[26]The object in this and the next clause is omitted in the Greek, but needs to be supplied in English. "A person" is also possible, but as the clauses preceding and following these two clauses are explicitly first person, we have chosen "me."

[27]*καὶ ἀκουσίων* (something like "even involuntary"), while in the manuscripts, is awkward enough that it is bracketed by Burnet, who further notes that *τῶν τοιούτων ἁμαρτημάτων* is genitive because it expresses the charge being prosecuted. It is already clear that this clause is referring to offences committed out of ignorance; there is no need for *καὶ ἀκουσίων*, and the clause reads better without it. *ἁμάρτημα* is the concrete substantive of the verb *ἁμαρτάνω* (*miss the mark*, *fail*, *go wrong*); we have preferred "missteps" to "failings" or "wrongs".

[28]*συγγίγνομαι* has the sense of getting together with someone and conversing with them.

Ἀλλὰ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοῦτο μὲν ἤδη δῆλον (26b) *οὑγὼ ἔλεγον, ὅτι Μελήτῳ τούτων οὔτε μέγα οὔτε μικρὸν πώποτε ἐμέλησεν. ὅμως δὲ δὴ λέγε ἡμῖν, πῶς με φὴς διαφθείρειν, ὦ Μέλητε, τοὺς νεωτέρους; ἢ δῆλον δὴ ὅτι κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν ἣν ἐγράψω θεοὺς διδάσκοντα μὴ νομίζειν οὓς ἡ πόλις νομίζει, ἕτερα δὲ δαιμόνια καινά; οὐ ταῦτα λέγεις ὅτι διδάσκων διαφθείρω;*

But to be sure, men of Athens, this that I was saying already is clear, that Meletus has never yet been concerned either a lot or a little with these matters. But nevertheless tell us, Meletus, how do you claim that I corrupt the young? Or is it clear that it is, according to your indictment, by teaching them not to worship the gods that the city worships, but to practice other novel rites?[29] Do you not claim that I corrupt the young by teaching these things?[30]

[29]On *θεοὺς … νομίζειν* and *δαιμόνια καινά*, see fn.9 on p.11 and fn.7 on p.3.

[30]Literally, "do you not say that I corrupt [by] teaching these things."

Πάνυ μὲν οὖν σφόδρα ταῦτα λέγω.

I most certainly do claim this.[31]

[31]It would be difficult for a response in Greek to be more emphatic.

Πρὸς αὐτῶν τοίνυν, ὦ Μέλητε, τούτων τῶν θεῶν ὧν νῦν ὁ λόγος ἐστίν, εἰπὲ ἔτι σαφέστερον καὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν (26c) *τουτοισί. ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐ δύναμαι μαθεῖν πότερον λέγεις διδάσκειν με νομίζειν εἶναί τινας θεούς – καὶ αὐτὸς ἄρα νομίζω εἶναι θεοὺς καὶ οὐκ εἰμὶ τὸ παράπαν ἄθεος οὐδὲ ταύτῃ ἀδικῶ – οὐ μέντοι οὕσπερ γε ἡ πόλις ἀλλὰ ἑτέρους, καὶ τοῦτ' ἔστιν ὅ μοι ἐγκαλεῖς, ὅτι ἑτέρους ἢ παντάπασί με φὴς οὔτε αὐτὸν νομίζειν θεοὺς τούς τε ἄλλους ταῦτα διδάσκειν;*

So by these very gods, Meletus, of whom we are now speaking,[32] explain still more clearly to me and to these men. For I am not able to discern whether you mean that I teach the belief that there are some gods[33] — and so I myself believe that there are gods and am not altogether godless nor do wrong in that way — , not, to be sure, the ones the city worships, but others, and this is what you charge against me, that I believe in other gods, or do you claim that I myself altogether do not believe in gods and teach others these things?

[32]The common expression *πρὸς* + gods or the name of a specific god = *by/before/in the eyes of.*

[33]Literally, "that I teach to believe there to be some gods"; we have chosen to change the verb *believe* to the noun *belief* to avoid having to insert a specific direct object that is required in English but quite naturally omitted in the Greek. Socrates could be accused of a bit of rhetorical sleight of hand here — *θεοὺς νομίζειν* (*worship gods*) becomes *θεοὺς νομίζειν εἶναι* (*believe there to be gods*) — , but the purpose of his interrogation of Meletus is solely to expose the charges against him for the cynical nonsense they are. See fn.7 on p.3 and fn.9 on p.11.

Ταῦτα λέγω, ὡς τὸ παράπαν οὐ νομίζεις θεούς.

I claim that you altogether do not believe in gods.[34]

[34]Literally, "I say this, that ….

(26d) *Ὦ θαυμάσιε Μέλητε, ἵνα τί ταῦτα λέγεις; οὐδὲ ἥλιον οὐδὲ σελήνην ἄρα νομίζω θεοὺς εἶναι, ὥσπερ οἱ ἄλλοι ἄνθρωποι;*

Wondrous Meletus, what do you mean by this? Then I believe neither the Sun nor the Moon to be gods, as other men do?

Μὰ Δί', ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, ἐπεὶ τὸν μὲν ἥλιον λίθον φησὶν εἶναι τὴν δὲ σελήνην γῆν.

By Zeus, no, jurymen, since he says the Sun to be stone and the Moon earth.

Ἀναξαγόρου οἴει κατηγορεῖν, ὦ φίλε Μέλητε; καὶ οὕτω καταφρονεῖς τῶνδε καὶ οἴει αὐτοὺς ἀπείρους γραμμάτων εἶναι ὥστε οὐκ εἰδέναι ὅτι τὰ Ἀναξαγόρου βιβλία τοῦ Κλαζομενίου γέμει τούτων τῶν λόγων; καὶ δὴ καὶ οἱ νέοι ταῦτα παρ' ἐμοῦ μανθάνουσιν, ἃ ἔξεστιν ἐνίοτε εἰ πάνυ πολλοῦ δραχμῆς (26e) *ἐκ τῆς ὀρχήστρας πριαμένοις Σωκράτους καταγελᾶν, ἐὰν προσποιῆται ἑαυτοῦ εἶναι, ἄλλως τε καὶ οὕτως ἄτοπα ὄντα; ἀλλ', ὦ πρὸς Διός, οὑτωσί σοι δοκῶ; οὐδένα νομίζω θεὸν εἶναι;*

Do you think that you are accusing Anaxagoras, my dear Meletus? And do you so despise these ones[35] and think them to be so illiterate that they do not know that the books of Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ are full of these assertions.[36] And in particular that the young learn these things from me, when anyone can at any time buy a book of them from the orchestra, if at the very high price of a drachma, and laugh at Socrates, if he pretends that they are his own notions, especially being so strange?[37] But, my good man,[38] do I seem so to you?[39] That I do not believe in any gods?[40]

[35]The jury.

[36]λόγος has a great variety of meanings, all derived from "the word or that by which the inward thought is expressed" (LSJ). We have chosen "assertions" as best fitting the context, but many other choices are also possible.

[37]We have had to deviate widely from literal to render the Greek in acceptable English. Literally, "to the ones buying which at any time if at the very high price of a drachma from the orchestra it is permitted to laugh at Socrates, if he pretends [them] to be of himself." The ὀρχήστρα was, among other things, a section of the marketplace. The reference to price is sarcastic; a drachma was in fact a low price. ἄτοπος has the literal root sense *out of place*, and hence *odd*, *strange*, or even *absurd*.

[38]Literally, "O by Zeus," which would strike us as a very odd form of address, but is not uncommon Greek usage.

[39]That is, to be such a fool, along with not believing in gods.

[40]Literally, "Do I believe no god to be?"

Οὐ μέντοι μὰ Δία οὐδ' ὁπωστιοῦν.

By Zeus, no, not in any way whatsoever.[41]

[41]Not just extremely emphatic, but with a degree of emphasis beyond even Meletus's previous answers.

Ἀπιστός γ' εἶ, ὦ Μέλητε, καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖς, σαυτῷ. ἐμοὶ γὰρ δοκεῖ οὑτοσί, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πάνυ εἶναι ὑβριστὴς καὶ ἀκόλαστος, καὶ ἀτεχνῶς τὴν γραφὴν ταύτην ὕβρει τινὶ καὶ ἀκολασίᾳ καὶ νεότητι γράψασθαι. (27a) *ἔοικεν γὰρ ὥσπερ αἰνίγμα συντιθέντι διαπειρωμένῳ "ἆρα γνώσεται Σωκράτης ὁ σοφὸς δὴ ἐμοῦ χαριεντιζομένου καὶ ἐναντί' ἐμαυτῷ λέγοντος, ἢ ἐξαπατήσω αὐτὸν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς ἀκούοντας;" οὗτος γὰρ ἐμοὶ φαίνεται τὰ ἐναντία λέγειν αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἐν τῇ γραφῇ ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ εἴποι· "ἀδικεῖ Σωκράτης θεοὺς οὐ νομίζων, ἀλλὰ θεοὺς νομίζων." καίτοι τοῦτό ἐστι παίζοντος.*

In this, as it seems to me, you are not credible even to yourself, Meletus. For he,[42] men of Athens, seems to me to be very arrogant and undisciplined, and to have made this indictment simply with a youthful arrogance and want of discipline.[43] For it is just like someone making a trial[44] by posing a riddle, "Will the wise Socrates recognize that I am playing a joke and contradicting myself, or will I deceive him and all those listening?" For he appears to me to contradict himself in the indictment just as he would if he should say, "Socrates does wrong by not believing in gods, but by believing in gods."[45] And yet this is childishness.[46]

[42]Literally, "this one," meaning Meletus, with a deictic iota (see the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41): a more colloquial translation might be "this guy here."

[43]Literally, "with simply arrogance and want of discipline and youthfulness."

[44]In the sense of making an attempt.

[45]Here both νομίζων are without εἶναι, and so could be rendered *worshipping* or *believing*, but the latter seems to better fit the context. See fn.33 on p.15.

[46]Literally, "this is of one playing like a child/being childish."

Συνεπισκέψασθε δή, ὦ ἄνδρες, ᾗ μοι φαίνεται ταῦτα λέγειν. σὺ δὲ ἡμῖν ἀπόκριναι, ὦ Μέλητε. ὑμεῖς δέ, ὅπερ (27b) *κατ' ἀρχὰς ὑμᾶς παρῃτησάμην, μέμνησθέ μοι μὴ θορυβεῖν ἐὰν ἐν τῷ εἰωθότι τρόπῳ τοὺς λόγους ποιῶμαι.*

Consider now, men, in what way he seems to me to say these things.[47] And you make answer, Meletus. And you,[48] as I asked of you at the beginning, remember not to make a disturbance if I speak[49] in my customary manner.

[47]"In what way" goes with "seems to me," and "these things" means the things Meletus has said in the indictment. Socrates is now going to explain more fully how Meletus seems to him to be contradicting himself.

[48]The jury.

[49]More literally, "make my words," which could also be rendered "compose my arguments" or the like.

Ἔστιν ὅστις ἀνθρώπων, ὦ Μέλητε, ἀνθρώπεια μὲν νομίζει πράγματ' εἶναι, ἀνθρώπους δὲ οὐ νομίζει; ἀποκρινέσθω, ὦ ἄνδρες, καὶ μὴ ἄλλα καὶ ἄλλα θορυβείτω· ἔστ' ὅστις ἵππους μὲν οὐ νομίζει ἱππικὰ δὲ πράγματα; ἢ αὐλητὰς μὲν οὐ νομίζει εἶναι αὐλητικὰ δὲ πράγματα; οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ ἄριστε ἀνδρῶν· εἰ μὴ σὺ βούλει ἀποκρίνεσθαι, ἐγὼ σοὶ λέγω καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τουτοισί. ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τούτῳ γε ἀπόκριναι· (27c) *ἔστ' ὅστις δαιμόνια μὲν νομίζει πράγματ' εἶναι, δαίμονας δὲ οὐ νομίζει;*

Is there anyone, Meletus, who believes that there are human things, but not humans? Let him answer, men, and do not let him repeatedly make a disturbance.[50] Is there anyone who does not believe in horses, but believes in equine things? Or does not believe in flute players, but does believe in the things of flute players? There is not, my good man: if you are not willing to answer, I will speak for you and these others.[51] But answer the thing following on this: is there anyone who believes there to be divine things, but does not believe in divinities?[52]

[50]Meletus realizes he is trapped and resorts to refusing to answer and protesting. *θορυβείτω* is 3rd person singular: this time it is Meletus and not the jury that is making the disturbance. The "men" whom Socrates is addressing are some sort of officials responsible for keeping order in court, as becomes clear immediately below.

[51]With a deictic iota (see the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41): "these others here," referring to Anytus and Lycon.

[52]Here and throughout the argument, Socrates makes ambiguous use of *νομίζειν* meaning "worship" without *εἶναι* and "believe there to be/exist" with an explicit *or implied* *εἶναι*.

Οὐκ ἔστιν.

There is not.

Ὡς ὤνησας ὅτι μόγις ἀπεκρίνω ὑπὸ τουτωνὶ ἀναγκαζόμενος. οὐκοῦν δαιμόνια μὲν φῂς με καὶ νομίζειν καὶ διδάσκειν, εἴτ' οὖν καινὰ εἴτε παλαιά, ἀλλ' οὖν δαιμόνιά γε νομίζω κατὰ τὸν σὸν λόγον, καὶ ταῦτα καὶ διωμόσω ἐν τῇ ἀντιγραφῇ. εἰ δὲ δαιμόνια νομίζω καὶ δαίμονας δήπου πολλὴ ἀνάγκη νομίζειν μέ ἐστιν· οὐχ οὕτως ἔχει; ἔχει δή· τίθημι γάρ σε ὁμολογοῦντα, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἀποκρίνῃ. τοὺς δὲ (27d) *δαίμονας οὐχὶ ἤτοι θεούς γε ἡγούμεθα ἢ θεῶν παῖδας; φῂς ἢ οὔ;*

How good of you to answer so reluctantly, being compelled by the court officials.[53] Now then, you say that I practice and teach divine rites, whether novel or customary,[54] but nevertheless by your assertion I practice divine rites, and you even swore this in the indictment.[55] And if I practice divine rites, it is of course very necessary that I believe that there are divine beings: is it not so? It is: for I put you down as agreeing, since you do not answer. And do we not believe divine beings to be either gods or the children of gods? Yes or no?

[53]Sarcastic. Literally, "that you barely/scarcely answered." *ὑπὸ τουτωνί* = "by these persons here," with a deictic iota (see the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41): Plato is making clear that Meletus, who was required to answer, had to be compelled to do so by court officials.

[54]Literally, "ancient," "of old times," meaning those that the city has long practiced.

[55]It is unclear how the *ἀντιγραφή* differed from the *γραφή* (LSJ gives *indictment* for both), but any technical difference is irrelevant to Socrates's argument.

Πάνυ γε.

Certainly.

Οὐκοῦν εἴπερ δαίμονας ἡγοῦμαι, ὡς σὺ φῄς, εἰ μὲν θεοί τινές εἰσιν οἱ δαίμονες, τοῦτ' ἂν εἴη ὃ ἐγώ φημί σε αἰνίττεσθαι καὶ χαριεντίζεσθαι, θεοὺς οὐχ ἡγούμενον φάναι με θεοὺς αὖ ἡγεῖσθαι πάλιν, ἐπειδήπερ γε δαίμονας ἡγοῦμαι. εἰ δ' αὖ οἱ δαίμονες θεῶν παῖδές εἰσιν νόθοι τινὲς ἢ ἐκ νυμφῶν ἢ ἔκ τινων ἄλλων ὧν δὴ καὶ λέγονται, τίς ἂν ἀνθρώπων θεῶν μὲν παῖδας ἡγοῖτο εἶναι, θεοὺς δὲ μή; ὁμοίως γὰρ (27e) *ἂν ἄτοπον εἴη ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἵππων μὲν παῖδας ἡγοῖτο ἢ καὶ ὄνων, τοὺς ἡμιόνους, ἵππους δὲ καὶ ὄνους μὴ ἡγοῖτο εἶναι. ἀλλ', ὦ Μέλητε, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως σὺ ταῦτα οὐχὶ ἀποπειρώμενος ἡμῶν ἐγράψω τὴν γραφὴν ταύτην ἢ ἀπορῶν ὅτι ἐγκαλοῖς ἐμοὶ ἀληθὲς ἀδίκημα· ὅπως δὲ σύ τινα πείθοις ἂν καὶ σμικρὸν νοῦν ἔχοντα ἀνθρώπων, ὡς οὐ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔστιν καὶ δαιμόνια καὶ θεῖα ἡγεῖσθαι, καὶ αὖ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μήτε* (28a) *δαίμονας μήτε θεοὺς μήτε ἥρωας, οὐδεμία μηχανή ἐστιν.*

Now then, if indeed we believe, as you say, in divinities, if the divinities are gods,[56] this would be what I say you to be posing as a riddle and saying in jest, that you assert that I, not believing in gods, in turn believe in gods, since indeed I believe in divinities. And if in turn the divinities are bastard children[57] of gods, either by nymphs or by others they say,[58] who[59] would believe that there were children of gods, but not gods? For it would be just as absurd as it would if someone should believe in the offspring of horses and donkeys,[60] the demi-asses,[61] but not believe that there were horses and donkeys. But, Meletus, it is not possible that you were not making a trial[62] of us in writing this indictment, or were at a loss as to what true wrong to charge me with: and how you would persuade anyone[63] having even a little intelligence that it is not of the same person[64] to believe in divine and godly things, and then of the same person to believe neither in divinities nor gods nor heroes,[65] there is no contrivance.[66]

[56]Literally, "some/certain gods."

[57]Literally, "some/certain bastard children."

[58]Literally, "by some/certain others whom they also say," meaning by any of the others who are fabled to have borne children by gods.

[59]Literally, "who of men."

[60]Literally, "or even donkeys" or "or, if you will, donkeys." *ἵππος* (*horse*) and *ὄνος* (*donkey*) can be either masculine or feminine, and thus refer to stallions, mares, he-asses, or she-asses, and *ἡμίονος* can refer to a mule or a hinny. As the reference is clearly to hybrid offspring, we have rendered "or" as "and" and leave it to the reader to sort this all out to his or her satisfaction.

[61]We have chosen *demi-asses* over *mules* to capture the play on *ἡμίθεος* (*demigod*) that would have occurred to Socrates's audience (and that occurs explicitly below in (28c).)

[62]Again in the sense of making an attempt or putting to the test.

[63]Literally, "anyone of men."

[64]Literally, "of the same one," referring to a person. The sense is of its being inherent in or characteristic of the same person to hold these two beliefs.

[65]*ἥρως* = *warrior*, *hero* in the Homeric sense. The term is used below of those who fought at Troy, in particular of Achilles, whose mother was the goddess Thetis.

[66]*μηχανή* = *device*, *contrivance*. We have adhered closely to the Greek of this last sentence, but with any phrasing it would require careful parsing, and that is by design: Socrates is both finishing off Meletus with a flourish and showing that, had he chosen, he was fully capable of doing rhetorical circles around his accusers. Even Burnet admits to having initially been confused enough by this convoluted sentence, with its multiple negatives and the phrase governing "how" moved from its beginning to its end, to have at first thought the manuscripts were corrupt.

Ἀλλὰ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ὡς μὲν ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀδικῶ κατὰ τὴν Μελήτου γραφήν, οὐ πολλῆς μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἀπολογίας, ἀλλὰ ἱκανὰ καὶ ταῦτα· ὃ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἔλεγον, ὅτι πολλή μοι ἀπέχθεια γέγονεν καὶ πρὸς πολλούς, εὖ ἴστε ὅτι ἀληθές ἐστιν καὶ τοῦτ' ἔστιν ὃ ἐμὲ αἱρεῖ, ἐάνπερ αἱρῇ, οὐ Μέλητος οὐδὲ Ἄνυτος ἀλλ' ἡ τῶν πολλῶν διαβολή τε καὶ φθόνος. ἃ δὴ πολλοὺς καὶ ἄλλους καὶ ἀγαθοὺς (28b) *ἄνδρας ᾕρηκεν, οἶμαι δὲ καὶ αἱρήσει· οὐδὲν δὲ δεινὸν μὴ ἐν ἐμοὶ στῇ.*

But to be sure, men of Athens, that I do not do wrong according to Meletus's indictment does not seem to me to require much defense, but even this suffices:[1] but as I was saying earlier, that a great enmity against me has arisen on the part of many, know well that it is true and that this is what convicts[2] me, if it does convict me, not Meletus or Anytus, but rather the prejudice and malice of the many. Which very things have convicted many other good men,[3] and I suppose will convict: there is no danger of its stopping with me.[4]

[1]Literally, "to be of great defense, but even these things [to be] sufficient."

[2]*αἱρεῖ* is present tense, not future. As will become clear in the antitimesis, Socrates fully expected to be convicted.

[3]Literally, "many and other and good men": again, Greek tends to link quantifying adjectives by *καί* (*and*) where English would not.

[4]Literally, "it is not a fearful thing/thing to be feared that it stand on/at me," but the sense is exactly captured by the given idiomatic rendering.

Ἴσως ἂν οὖν εἴποι τις· "εἶτ' οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ, ὦ Σώκρατες, τοιοῦτον ἐπιτήδευμα ἐπιτηδεύσας ἐξ οὗ κινδυνεύεις νυνὶ ἀποθανεῖν;" ἐγὼ δὲ τούτῳ ἂν δίκαιον λόγον ἀντείποιμι, ὅτι "οὐ καλῶς λέγεις, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, εἰ οἴει δεῖν κίνδυνον ὑπολογίζεσθαι τοῦ ζῆν ἢ τεθνάναι ἄνδρα ὅτου τι καὶ σμικρὸν ὄφελός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκεῖνο μόνον σκοπεῖν ὅταν πράττῃ, πότερον δίκαια ἢ ἄδικα πράττει, καὶ ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ ἔργα ἢ κακοῦ. φαῦλοι (28c) *γὰρ ἂν τῷ γε σῷ λόγῳ εἶεν τῶν ἡμιθέων ὅσοι ἐν Τροίᾳ τετελευτήκασιν οἵ τε ἄλλοι καὶ ὁ τῆς Θέτιδος υἱός, ὃς τοσοῦτον τοῦ κινδύνου κατεφρόνησεν παρὰ τὸ αἰσχρόν τι ὑπομεῖναι ὥστε, ἐπειδὴ εἶπεν ἡ μήτηρ αὐτῷ προθυμουμένῳ "Ἕκτορα ἀποκτεῖναι, θεὸς οὖσα, οὑτωσί πως, ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι· "ὦ παῖ, εἰ τιμωρήσεις Πατρόκλῳ τῷ ἑταίρῳ τὸν φόνον καὶ "Ἕκτορα ἀποκτενεῖς, αὐτὸς ἀποθανῇ — αὐτίκα γάρ τοι,' φησί, "μεθ' "Ἕκτορα πότμος ἑτοῖμος" — ὁ δὲ τοῦτο ἀκούσας τοῦ μὲν θανάτου καὶ τοῦ κινδύνου ὠλιγώρησε, πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον* (28d) *δείσας τὸ ζῆν κακὸς ὢν καὶ τοῖς φίλοις μὴ τιμωρεῖν, "αὐτίκα," φησί, "τεθναίην, δίκην ἐπιθεὶς τῷ ἀδικοῦντι, ἵνα μὴ ἐνθάδε μένω καταγέλαστος παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν ἄχθος ἀρούρης." μὴ αὐτὸν οἴει φροντίσαι θανάτου καὶ κινδύνου;*

Now perhaps someone might say, "Are you not then ashamed, Socrates, making your business a practice from which you now run the risk of dying?"[1] And I would reply justly to this one, "You do not speak well, my good man, if you think it necessary that a man of even some small worth[2] reckon the risk of living or dying, but rather when he acts consider only whether he acts justly or unjustly,[3] and whether his deeds are those of a good or a bad man.[4] For by your reckoning all the demigods who died in Troy would be contemptible,[5] especially the son of Thetis,[6] who so despised the risk in comparison to the shame of remaining idle that,[7] when his mother, being a goddess, spoke to him, eager to slay Hektor, something like this, as I suppose, "Child, if you avenge the killing of your comrade Patroklos and slay Hektor, you yourself will die — for your fate," she says,[8] "is immediately at hand after Hektor's" — and hearing this he thought little of death and the risk, but fearing much more to live being contemptible[9] and not to avenge his friends, says, "May I forthwith die, having brought justice to one doing wrong, lest I remain a laughing stock beside the crook-beaked ships, a dead weight upon the earth."[10] You do not think that he gave heed to the risk of death, do you?[11]

[1]Having disposed of Meletus and the indictment, and having explained the true origin of the prejudice against him, Socrates now turns to his true defense — though it is not a defense, but rather an explanation of how he has been doing the right thing.

[2]Literally, "a man of whom there is any even small benefit (profit, advantage)."

[3]Literally, "does right/just or wrong/unjust things."

[4]With *ἀγαθοῦ* and *κακοῦ* being very generic words for *good* and *bad*.

[5]"Contemptible" is arguably very strong for *φαῦλος* (= *slight*, *insignificant* and hence, of people, *base* or *mean*), but "base" or "mean" seemed awkwardly archaic.

[6]Achilles.

[7]*ὥστε* would have been followed by a result clause, but there is an anacolouthon and the thought is resumed instead with *ὁ δὲ τοῦτο*.

[8]Although this all happened in the distant past, there is now a switch to the vivid present. This would have seemed more natural in Greek than it does in English.

[9]*κακός* is a generic word for bad and might in this context have been rendered by the somewhat archaic "base," but we have chosen for consistency with the rendering of *φαῦλος* above to again use "contemptible."

[10]*νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν* ("crook-beaked ships") and *ἄχθος ἀρούρης* (literally, "a burden of the glebe/earth') are Homeric phrases.

[11]Literally, "death and the risk."

Οὕτω γὰρ ἔχει, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· οὗ ἄν τις ἑαυτὸν τάξῃ ἡγησάμενος βέλτιστον εἶναι ἢ ὑπ᾽ ἄρχοντος ταχθῇ, ἐνταῦθα δεῖ, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, μένοντα κινδυνεύειν, μηδὲν ὑπολογιζόμενον μήτε θάνατον μήτε ἄλλο μηδὲν πρὸ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ. ἐγὼ οὖν δεινὰ ἂν εἴην εἰργασμένος, ὦ ἄνδρες (28e) Ἀθηναῖοι, εἰ ὅτε μέν με οἱ ἄρχοντες ἔταττον, οὓς ὑμεῖς εἵλεσθε ἄρχειν μου, καὶ ἐν Ποτειδαίᾳ καὶ ἐν Ἀμφιπόλει καὶ ἐπὶ Δηλίῳ, τότε μὲν οὗ ἐκεῖνοι ἔταττον ἔμενον ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλος τις καὶ ἐκινδύνευον ἀποθανεῖν, τοῦ δὲ θεοῦ τάττοντος, ὡς ἐγὼ ᾠήθην τε καὶ ὑπέλαβον, φιλοσοφοῦντά με δεῖν ζῆν καὶ ἐξετάζοντα ἐμαυτὸν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους, ἐνταῦθα δὲ φοβηθεὶς ἢ θάνατον (29a) ἢ ἄλλ᾽ ὁτιοῦν πρᾶγμα λίποιμι τὴν τάξιν. δεινόν τἂν εἴη, καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς τότ᾽ ἄν με δικαίως εἰσάγοι τις εἰς δικαστήριον, ὅτι οὐ νομίζω θεοὺς εἶναι ἀπειθῶν τῇ μαντείᾳ καὶ δεδιὼς θάνατον καὶ οἰόμενος σοφὸς εἶναι οὐκ ὤν. τὸ γάρ τοι θάνατον δεδιέναι, ὦ ἄνδρες, οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ δοκεῖν σοφὸν εἶναι μὴ ὄντα· δοκεῖν γὰρ εἰδέναι ἐστὶν ἃ οὐκ οἶδεν. οἶδε μὲν γὰρ οὐδεὶς τὸν θάνατον οὐδ᾽ εἰ τυγχάνει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ πάντων μέγιστον ὂν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, δεδίασι δ᾽ ὡς εὖ εἰδότες (29b) ὅτι μέγιστον τῶν κακῶν ἐστι. καίτοι πῶς οὐκ ἀμαθία ἐστὶν αὕτη ἡ ἐπονείδιστος, ἡ τοῦ οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι ἃ οὐκ οἶδεν; ἐγὼ δ᾽, ὦ ἄνδρες, τούτῳ καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἴσως διαφέρω τῶν πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ εἰ δή τῳ σοφώτερός του φαίην εἶναι, τούτῳ ἄν, ὅτι οὐκ εἰδὼς ἱκανῶς περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου οὕτω καὶ οἶομαι οὐκ εἰδέναι. τὸ δὲ ἀδικεῖν καὶ ἀπειθεῖν τῷ βελτίονι καὶ θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, ὅτι κακὸν καὶ αἰσχρόν ἐστιν οἶδα. πρὸ οὖν τῶν κακῶν ὧν οἶδα ὅτι κακά ἐστιν ἃ μὴ οἶδα εἰ καὶ ἀγαθὰ ὄντα τυγχάνει οὐδέποτε φοβήσομαι οὐδὲ φεύξομαι· ὥστε οὐδ᾽ εἰ (29c) με νῦν ὑμεῖς ἀφίετε Ἀνύτῳ ἀπιστήσαντες, ὃς ἔφη ἢ τὴν ἀρχὴν οὐ δεῖν ἐμὲ δεῦρο εἰσελθεῖν ἤ, ἐπειδὴ εἰσῆλθον, οὐχ οἷόν τ᾽ εἶναι τὸ μὴ ἀποκτεῖναί με λέγων πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὡς εἰ διαφευξοίμην ἤδη ἂν ὑμῶν οἱ υἱεῖς ἐπιτηδεύοντες ἃ Σωκράτης διδάσκει πάντες παντάπασι διαφθαρήσονται, — εἴ μοι πρὸς ταῦτα εἴποιτε· “ὦ Σώκρατες, νῦν μὲν Ἀνύτῳ οὐ πεισόμεθα ἀλλ᾽ ἀφίεμέν σε, ἐπὶ τούτῳ μέντοι, ἐφ᾽ ᾧτε μηκέτι ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ζητήσει διατρίβειν μηδὲ φιλοσοφεῖν· ἐὰν δὲ (29d) ἁλῷς ἔτι τοῦτο πράττων, ἀποθανῇ” — εἰ οὖν με, ὅπερ εἶπον, ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀφίοιτε, εἴποιμ᾽ ἂν ὑμῖν ὅτι “ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἀσπάζομαι μὲν καὶ φιλῶ, πείσομαι δὲ μᾶλλον τῷ θεῷ ἢ ὑμῖν καὶ ἕωσπερ ἂν ἐμπνέω καὶ οἷός τε ὦ οὐ μὴ παύσωμαι φιλοσοφῶν καὶ ὑμῖν παρακελευόμενός τε καὶ ἐνδεικνύμενος ὅτῳ ἂν ἀεὶ ἐντυγχάνω ὑμῶν, λέγων οἷάπερ εἴωθα, ὅτι ‘ὦ ἄριστε ἀνδρῶν, Ἀθηναῖος ὤν, πόλεως τῆς μεγίστης καὶ εὐδοκιμωτάτης

For it is in truth this way, men of Athens: where someone stations himself believing it to be best, or is stationed by an officer, it is necessary, as it seems to me, to risk remaining there, reckoning nothing, neither death nor anything else, before shame. Now, I would be working dreadful things, men of Athens, if, when the officers whom you chose to command me, stationed me at Potidaea and Amphipolis and Delium, I then, just like anyone else, remained where they stationed me and risked dying,[1] but when, as I think and suppose, the god stations me,[2] assigning to me to live philosophizing and examining myself and others, here, fearing death or any other thing whatever, I should leave my post. It would be dreadful, and truly someone would then justly summon me to court, charging that I do not believe that there are gods because I disobey the oracle and fear death and think myself to be wise when I am not.[3] For to fear death, men, is nothing other than to seem to be wise when one is not:[4] for it is to seem to know things that one does not know. For no one knows whether death may even be the greatest of all good things for man,[5] but they fear it on the grounds of knowing it to be the greatest of all ills. And yet how is this not reproachable ignorance, that of thinking one knows that which one does not know? I, men, perhaps differ[6] also here to this degree[7] from the majority of men, and if I claim to be in any degree wiser than anyone, it would be by this much, that not having sufficient knowledge about things in Hades,[8] so also I do not suppose that I know. But to do wrong and disobey one's better, god or man, I do know is wicked and shameful.[9] Now, in the face of things that I know to be wicked, I will never fear nor shrink from things that I do not know whether they may even be good:[10] so that not even if you now acquit me, rebuffing Anytus,[11] who says that it is necessary either not to summon me here[12] to begin with or, since I have been summoned, that is not possible not to put me to death, saying that if I should be released,[13] your sons, practicing the things that Socrates teaches, will at once all be altogether corrupted, — if considering these things[14] you should say to me, “Socrates, we will not now be persuaded by Anytus, but acquit you, on this condition, however, that you no longer devote time to this investigation or philosophize: and if you are caught still doing this, you will die” — if now, as I just said, you should acquit me on these conditions, I would say to you, “I, men of Athens, cherish you and hold you dear, but I will obey the god rather than you, and as long as I breathe and am able, I will not cease[15] philosophizing and exhorting you and pointing out to whomever of you I chance to meet at any given time, saying just the sort of things I am accustomed to, ‘My good man, being Athenian, of the city that is greatest and best reputed with regard to wisdom and

[1]Socrates is reputed to have served bravely in combat.

[2]The Greek uses the genitive absolute: “the god stationing me,” with *τάττοντος* now having more the sense of “assigning” and *φιλοσοφοῦντά με δεῖν ζῆν* (“to be necessary to live philosophizing”) being the thing assigned.

[3]Literally, “… to court, that/because I do not believe that there are gods, [I] disobeying the oracle and fearing death and thinking myself to be wise, not being [wise].”

[4]Literally, “to seem to be wise, not being [wise].”

[5]Literally, “no one knows death, not even if it happens to be ….”

[6]The verb *διαφέρω* can mean either simply to differ in a neutral sense or to surpass or excel. Though we have chosen to render it here as the former, it could certainly also be taken to have the latter sense. But see fn.18 on p.29.

[7]We have, with Burnet, taken *τούτῳ* (and so also, for consistency, the *τούτῳ* that follows) as dative of degree of difference, but it could also be read as dative of respect (“in this respect”). But see fn.8 on p.8.

[8]In *τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου*, the noun that would go with *τῶν* is quite naturally omitted in Greek but required in English; we have chosen “things.”

[9]Literally, “disobey the better, both god and man,” though the sense is as we have rendered it. *κακόν* is a generic word for *bad*; we have chosen “wicked” as fitting more closely with *αἰσχρόν* (*shameful*). The last clause is more literally “I know that [doing wrong and disobeying] is wicked and shameful.”

[10]*οὐδέποτε* is a more emphatic form of *οὔποτε* (*never*). Literally, “Before the evils that I know that they are evil, I will never fear nor shrink from things which I do not know if they even happen to be good things.”

[11]*ἀπιστέω* is to *disbelieve*, *distrust*, but can also mean *disobey*, *refuse to comply* (LSJ). Burnet suggests “refusing to do as Anytus bids you.” One might also render this as “discrediting.”

[12]To court.

[13]Literally, “escape,” in the sense of being acquitted and released.

[14]More literally, “in this regard.” *πρός* with the accusative is used to indicate relation in a variety of more or less vague ways.

[15]*οὐ μὴ παύσωμαι*: *οὐ μή* with the aorist subjunctive expresses emphatic denial (Smythe §1804).

εἰς σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχύν, χρημάτων μὲν οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ ἐπιμελούμενος ὅπως σοι ἔσται ὡς πλεῖστα, (29e) καὶ δόξης καὶ τιμῆς, φρονήσεως δὲ καὶ ἀληθείας καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ὅπως ὡς βελτίστη ἔσται οὐκ ἐπιμελῇ οὐδὲ φροντίζεις;' καὶ ἐάν τις ὑμῶν ἀμφισβητήσῃ καὶ φῇ ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, οὐκ εὐθὺς ἀφήσω αὐτὸν οὐδ' ἄπειμι, ἀλλ' ἐρήσομαι αὐτὸν καὶ ἐξετάσω καὶ ἐλέγξω, καὶ ἐάν μοι μὴ δοκῇ κεκτῆσθαι ἀρετήν, (30a) φάναι δέ, ὀνειδιῶ ὅτι τὰ πλείστου ἄξια περὶ ἐλαχίστου ποιεῖται, τὰ δὲ φαυλότερα περὶ πλείονος. ταῦτα καὶ νεωτέρῳ καὶ πρεσβυτέρῳ ὅτῳ ἂν ἐντυγχάνω ποιήσω, καὶ ξένῳ καὶ ἀστῷ, μᾶλλον δὲ τοῖς ἀστοῖς, ὅσῳ μου ἐγγυτέρω ἐστὲ γένει. ταῦτα γὰρ κελεύει ὁ θεός, εὖ ἴστε, καὶ ἐγὼ οἶομαι οὐδέν πω ὑμῖν μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι ἐν τῇ πόλει ἢ τὴν ἐμὴν τῷ θεῷ ὑπηρεσίαν. οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο πράττων ἐγὼ περιέρχομαι ἢ πείθων ὑμῶν καὶ νεωτέρους καὶ πρεσβυτέρους μήτε σωμάτων (30b) ἐπιμελεῖσθαι μήτε χρημάτων πρότερον μηδὲ οὕτω σφόδρα ὡς τῆς ψυχῆς ὅπως ὡς ἀρίστη ἔσται, λέγων ὅτι 'οὐκ ἐκ χρημάτων ἀρετὴ γίγνεται, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀρετῆς χρήματα καὶ τἆλλα ἀγαθὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἅπαντα καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ.' εἰ μὲν οὖν ταῦτα λέγων διαφθείρω τοὺς νέους, ταῦτ' ἂν εἴη βλαβερά· εἰ δέ τίς μέ φησιν ἄλλα λέγειν ἢ ταῦτα οὐδὲν λέγει. πρὸς ταῦτα" φαίην ἄν, "ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοi, ἢ πείθεσθε Ἀνύτῳ ἢ μή, καὶ ἢ ἀφίετέ με ἢ μή ὡς ἐμοῦ οὐκ (30c) ἂν ποιήσαντος ἄλλα, οὐδ' εἰ μέλλω πολλάκις τεθνάναι."

might, are you not ashamed for being concerned about how you will have as much money as possible, and as great a reputation and as much honor as possible, but for wisdom[16] and truth and how your soul will be as good as possible you have no concern nor yet give thought?' And if any of you disagrees and says he does care, I will not straightaway acquit him and go away, but I will question and examine and refute him, and if he does not seem to me to possess virtue, but claims to, I will reproach him that he esteems least highly the things most worthy, and has greater esteem for baser things. And I will do this for young and old, whomever I encounter, for both stranger and townsman, and much more so for townsmen, as you are closer kith and kin to me.[17] For know well, the god commands this, and I think no greater good for you to have come about in the city than my service to the god. For I go about doing nothing other than persuading young and old among you to care neither for your physical bodies[18] nor for money either in preference to nor so passionately as for how your soul will be as virtuous[19] as possible, saying, 'Virtue does not arise from money, but rather from virtue are money and all other things, both private and public,[20] good for men.' And if saying this I corrupt the young, this would be harmful; but if someone claims that I say things other than this, he is talking nonsense.[21] Therefore, men of Athens," I would say, "either be persuaded by Anytus or not, and either acquit me or not, on the grounds of my not doing otherwise, not even if I am about to die many times over."[22]

[16]Burnet: "In Plato there is no distinction between *φρόνησις* and *σοφία*."

[17]Literally, "by how much you are closer to me in *γένει*," with *γένος* meaning *type*, *kind*, *family*, *race*, etc. "Kith and kin" is less than ideal, but neither is there any notion of a racial difference that "race" would imply. The sense of *γένει* here might best be captured by the contemporary informal usage of the colloquial phrase "my people".

[18]The Greek says merely "bodies," but with the notion of contrast with the soul.

[19]*ἀγαθός* has several comparatives and superlatives. Just above in (29e) the superlative *βέλτιστος* implied moral excellence; here the superlative *ἄριστος* (*best*, *most excellent*) has a common etymological ancestor with *ἀρετή* (*excellence* or, as it is used in the very next line, *virtue*), and we have accordingly rendered it "virtuous."

[20]Or maybe "both personal and communal."

[21]Literally, "he says nothing."

[22]Literally simply "many times."

Μὴ θορυβεῖτε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἀλλ᾽ ἐμμείνατέ μοι οἷς ἐδεήθην ὑμῶν, μὴ θορυβεῖν ἐφ᾽ οἷς ἂν λέγω ἀλλ᾽ ἀκούειν· καὶ γάρ, ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι, ὀνήσεσθε ἀκούοντες. μέλλω γὰρ οὖν ἄττα ὑμῖν ἐρεῖν καὶ ἄλλα ἐφ᾽ οἷς ἴσως βοήσεσθε· ἀλλὰ μηδαμῶς ποιεῖτε τοῦτο. εὖ γὰρ ἴστε, ἐάν με ἀποκτείνητε τοιοῦτον ὄντα οἷον ἐγὼ λέγω οὐκ ἐμὲ μείζω βλάψετε ἢ ὑμᾶς αὐτούς· ἐμὲ μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἂν βλάψειεν οὔτε Μέλητος οὔτε Ἄνυτος — οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν δύναιτο — οὐ γὰρ οἴομαι θεμιτὸν (30d) *εἶναι ἀμείνονι ἀνδρὶ ὑπὸ χείρονος βλάπτεσθαι. ἀποκτείνειε μεντἂν ἴσως ἢ ἐξελάσειεν ἢ ἀτιμώσειεν· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα οὗτος μὲν ἴσως οἴεται καὶ ἄλλος τίς που μεγάλα κακά, ἐγὼ δ᾽ οὐκ οἶομαι, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον ποιεῖν ἃ οὑτοσὶ νῦν ποιεῖ, ἄνδρα ἀδίκως ἐπιχειρεῖν ἀποκτεινύναι. νῦν οὖν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πολλοῦ δέω ἐγὼ ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτοῦ ἀπολογεῖσθαι, ὥς τις ἂν οἴοιτο, ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, μή τι ἐξαμάρτητε περὶ τὴν τοῦ* (30e) *θεοῦ δόσιν ὑμῖν ἐμοῦ καταψηφισάμενοι. ἐὰν γάρ με ἀποκτείνητε, οὐ ῥᾳδίως ἄλλον τοιοῦτον εὑρήσετε, ἀτεχνῶς — εἰ καὶ γελοιότερον εἰπεῖν — προσκείμενον τῇ πόλει ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὥσπερ ἵππῳ μεγάλῳ μὲν καὶ γενναίῳ, ὑπὸ μεγέθους δὲ νωθεστέρῳ καὶ δεομένῳ ἐγείρεσθαι ὑπό μύωπός τινος, οἷον δή μοι δοκεῖ ὁ θεὸς ἐμὲ τῇ πόλει προστεθηκέναι τοιοῦτόν τινα, ὃς ὑμᾶς ἐγείρων καὶ πείθων καὶ ὀνειδίζων ἕνα ἕκαστον* (31a) *οὐδὲν παύομαι τὴν ἡμέραν ὅλην πανταχοῦ προσκαθίζων. τοιοῦτος οὖν ἄλλος οὐ ῥᾳδίως ὑμῖν γενήσεται, ὦ ἄνδρες, ἀλλ᾽ ἐὰν ἐμοὶ πείθησθε,*

Do not make a disturbance,[1] men of Athens, but abide by what I beseeched of you: not to make disturbance, but to listen. For you will also, I think, benefit from listening. For I am about to tell you some other things at which you will perhaps make an uproar; but by no means do this. For if you put me to death being the sort that I say I am, you will not harm me more than yourselves. For neither Meletus nor Anytus could do me any harm — for it would not even be possible[2] — for I do not think it allowed by divine law[3] for a better man to be harmed by a worse. To be sure he[4] might put me to death or banish me or disenfranchise me,[5] and perhaps he and others[6] might think these great ills, but I do not think they are, but much rather to do what he[7] is now doing, to try to put a man to death unjustly. So now, men of Athens, I am far from making a defense on my own behalf, as someone might suppose; but rather I make a defense on your behalf,[8] lest you do any harm regarding the gift of the god to you by condemning me.[9] For if you put me to death, you will not easily find another such one, simply,[10] — if to put it rather ridiculously[11] — laid by the god upon the city just as on a horse, great and noble,[12] but because of its great size very sluggish and in need of being roused by some fly,[13] as the likes of which the god seems to me to have bestowed[14] me upon the city, who rousing and persuading and reproaching each and every one of you do not cease the whole day from settling everywhere on you. Now, you will not easily meet with another such one,[15] men, and[16]

[1]Again, by this device Plato makes clear that Socrates's words have caused a clamor among the jurors.

[2]Cp. *οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνδρὶ ἀγαθῷ κακὸν οὐδέν* ("there is no ill for a good man") in (41d).

[3]*θεμιτός* is the adjective corresponding to *θέμις* (see fn.2 on p.8). *Just* and *righteous* (and Burnet's suggestion of "permitted") did not seem strong enough, nor to convey the sense of being higher than human law. LSJ's "allowed by the laws of God and men" is better, but needlessly introduces the complication (entirely absent in the Greek) of *God* versus *god* versus *gods*.

[4]Although Meletus *and* Anytus were just referred to, these three verbs are 3rd person singular, evidently focusing again on Anytus.

[5]Meaning the loss of civil rights.

[6]Literally,"but perhaps he and someone else, I suppose, . . . ," meaning that besides Anytus there may be others (without having anyone specific in mind) who feel the same way.

[7]*οὑτοσί*: "this one here," with a deictic iota, indicating that Socrates is referring directly to, and perhaps even pointing at, Anytus. See the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41.

[8]Literally, "but rather on your behalf," with the sense of speaking in defense implied.

[9]Although disks with solid or hollow pegs were later used, originally each juror's binary vote was kept anonymous by issuing him two pebbles, one light and one dark. As the line of jurors walked by two urns, each juror would drop one of his pebbles into the voting urn and the other into the discard urn. Thus from the word *ψῆφος* (*pebble*) come the verbs *ἀποψηφίζομαι* (*acquit*) and *καταψηφίζομαι* (*convict*, *comdemn*), with the meaning of the latter dependent on usage and context: *καταψηφίζομαι* can be used with the accusative of the crime to indicate conviction for that crime, but with the distinction between *convict* or *condemn* otherwise depending on context. Here the sense is clearly *condemn*.

[10]This begins the famous gadfly analogy.

[11]Literally, "if to speak even rather ridiculously/laughably" or "if to say even a rather ridiculous/laughable [thing]."

[12]*γενναῖος* = *noble* or, of animals, *well-bred*.

[13]Literally, a *μέν . . . δέ* construction: a horse [on the one hand] great and noble, but [on the other hand] very sluggish . . . ." We have adhered closely to the Greek even though the resulting English is awkward; it would have been more natural to say "laid upon the city like a fly upon a great horse . . . ." But while less so, the phrasing is also awkward in Greek, in a way that seems hard to explain simply as a device intended to affect extemporaneous speech.

[14]*προστίθημι* can be read concretely as *place* or *put upon* or, more abstractly, *bestow*.

[15]Literally, "another such one will not easily come to be for you."

[16]Literally, "but rather."

φείσεσθέ μου· ὑμεῖς δ' ἴσως τάχ' ἂν ἀχθόμενοι, ὥσπερ οἱ νυστάζοντες ἐγειρόμενοι, κρούσαντες ἄν με, πειθόμενοι Ἀνύτῳ, ῥᾳδίως ἂν ἀποκτείναιτε, εἶτα τὸν λοιπὸν βίον καθεύδοντες διατελοῖτε ἄν εἰ μή τινα ἄλλον ὁ θεὸς ὑμῖν ἐπιπέμψειεν κηδόμενος ὑμῶν. ὅτι δ' ἐγὼ τυγχάνω ὢν τοιοῦτος οἷος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ πόλει δεδόσθαι, ἐνθένδε (31b) ἂν κατανοήσαιτε· οὐ γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνῳ ἔοικε τὸ ἐμὲ τῶν μὲν ἐμαυτοῦ πάντων ἠμεληκέναι καὶ ἀνέχεσθαι τῶν οἰκείων ἀμελουμένων τοσαῦτα ἤδη ἔτη, τὸ δὲ ὑμέτερον πράττειν ἀεί, ἰδίᾳ ἑκάστῳ προσιόντα ὥσπερ πατέρα ἢ ἀδελφὸν πρεσβύτερον πείθοντα ἐπιμελεῖσθαι ἀρετῆς. καὶ εἰ μέν τι ἀπὸ τούτων ἀπέλαυνον καὶ μισθὸν λαμβάνων ταῦτα παρεκελευόμην, εἶχον ἄν τινα λόγον· νῦν δὲ ὁρᾶτε δὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ ὅτι οἱ κατήγοροι τἆλλα πάντα ἀναισχύντως οὕτω κατηγοροῦντες τοῦτό γε οὐχ οἷοί τε ἐγένοντο ἀπαναισχυντῆσαι (31c) παρασχόμενοι μάρτυρα, ὡς ἐγώ ποτέ τινα ἢ ἐπραξάμην μισθὸν ἢ ᾔτησα. ἱκανὸν γάρ, οἶμαι, ἐγὼ παρέχομαι τὸν μάρτυρα ὡς ἀληθῆ λέγω, τὴν πενίαν.

if you heed me, you will spare me. But perhaps being annoyed, just like the half-asleep being awakened, you would, heeding Anytus, lightly swat me and put me to death,[17] then pass the rest of your life slumbering unless the god, being concerned for you, should send someone else to you. And that I happen to be such a one as to have been given to the city by the god, you may know from this: it[18] isn't human for me to have neglected my own affairs and to endure my household being untended for these many years, but to tend always to your affairs, approaching each of you privately like a father or an older brother, urging you to make virtue your concern.[19] And if I derived any benefit from this and were paid for giving this advice,[20] I would have some reason, but now even you yourselves see that my accusers, so shamelessly making all their other accusations, were not capable, supplying witnesses, of the shamelessness to say[21] that I ever either charged or demanded pay from anyone. For I supply, I think, a sufficient witness that I speak the truth: my poverty.

[17]Literally, "swatting me, heeding Anytus, would lightly put me to death."

[18]The *γάρ* is epexegetic: it is introducing the explanation that was just promised. See the end note on epexegetic *γάρ* on p.41.

[19]"For me to have neglected . . . ": the Greek here uses the articular infinitive, which could also be rendered by the English gerund ("my having neglected . . . "). More literally, *τοσαῦτα ἤδη ἔτη* = "for so many years already." And in these lines we have three instances of a noun that is quite naturally omitted in Greek but required in English: for *τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ πάντων* and later *τό ὑμέτερον*, we have supplied "affairs." And similarly *τῶν οἰκείων* may refer to household things (in the sense of property), household affairs, or household persons. More literally, *ἐπιμελεῖσθαι ἀρετῆς* = "take care of virtue," in the sense of making it one's focus and concern.

[20]Literally, "and taking pay/wages advised these things."

[21]More literally, "were not able to shamelessly say, calling witnesses, . . . ," but in the Greek the *οὐχ οἷοί τε ἐγένοντο* ("were not able") goes with both the participial phrase *παρασχόμενοι μάρτυρα* ("supplying witnesses") and *ἀπαναισχυντῆσαι* ("to shamelessly say"): the sense is that his accusers were able neither themselves to say, nor to supply witnesses to say, that Socrates ever profited monetarily from his endeavors.

Ἴσως ἂν οὖν δόξειεν ἄτοπον εἶναι, ὅτι δὴ ἐγὼ ἰδίᾳ μὲν ταῦτα συμβουλεύω περιιὼν καὶ πολυπραγμονῶ, δημοσίᾳ δὲ οὐ τολμῶ ἀναβαίνων εἰς τὸ πλῆθος τὸ ὑμέτερον συμβουλεύειν τῇ πόλει. τούτου δὲ αἴτιόν ἐστιν ὃ ὑμεῖς ἐμοῦ πολλάκις ἀκηκόατε πολλαχοῦ λέγοντος, ὅτι μοι θεῖόν τι καὶ (31d) *δαιμόνιον γίγνεται [φωνή], ὃ δὴ καὶ ἐν τῇ γραφῇ ἐπικωμῳδῶν Μέλητος ἐγράψατο. ἐμοὶ δὲ τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐκ παιδὸς ἀρξάμενον, φωνή τις γιγνομένη, ἣ ὅταν γένηται, ἀεὶ ἀποτρέπει με τοῦτο ὃ ἂν μέλλω πράττειν, προτρέπει δὲ οὔποτε. τοῦτ' ἔστιν ὅ μοι ἐναντιοῦται τὰ πολιτικὰ πράττειν καὶ παγκάλως γέ μοι δοκεῖ ἐναντιοῦσθαι· εὖ γὰρ ἴστε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, εἰ ἐγὼ πάλαι ἐπεχείρησα πράττειν τὰ πολιτικὰ πράγματα, πάλαι ἂν ἀπολώλη καὶ οὔτ'* (31e) *ἂν ὑμᾶς ὠφελήκη οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἂν ἐμαυτόν. καί μοι μὴ ἄχθεσθε λέγοντι τἀληθῆ· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅστις ἀνθρώπων σωθήσεται οὔτε ὑμῖν οὔτε ἄλλῳ πλήθει οὐδενὶ γνησίως ἐναντιούμενος καὶ διακωλύων πολλὰ ἄδικα καὶ παράνομα ἐν τῇ πόλει γίγνεσθαι, ἀλλ'* (32a) *ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι τὸν τῷ ὄντι μαχούμενον ὑπὲρ τοῦ δικαίου, καὶ εἰ μέλλει ὀλίγον χρόνον σωθήσεσθαι, ἰδιωτεύειν ἀλλὰ μὴ δημοσιεύειν.*

Now perhaps it might seem out of place that I, going around and meddling in others' business,[1] advise these things privately, but do not, going up before the throng of you, venture[2] to advise the city. And the reason for this is what you have heard me saying many times in many places, that a certain godlike and divine thing comes to me, [a voice,][3] which indeed Meletus also parodied in the indictment.[4] And I have experienced this starting from childhood, a certain voice arising, which, whenever it arises, always turns me away from what I am about to do, and never turns me toward anything.[5] It is this that opposes my becoming involved in political affairs, and it seems to me to be in opposition all for the best: for know well, men of Athens, if I had attempted to become involved in political affairs, I would long ago have perished[6] and would have been of no benefit either to you or to myself. And do not be upset at my speaking the truth: for there is no man who, opposing either you or any other throng, and preventing many wrong and illegal things from occurring in the city, will survive,[7] but it is rather necessary that the one in fact fighting on behalf of what is right, if he is about to survive for even a little while, act privately and not publicly.

[1]The verb *πολυπραγμονέω* means to be a busybody or stick one's nose in others' business.

[2]We have chosen *venture* rather than the more usual and stronger *dare*.

[3]Literally, "a certain godlike and divine thing arises/comes about to/for me[, a voice]." The reference is to what is often translated as "the divine sign." We have here adhered closely to the Greek in our rendering of *τι* as *thing*; in (40b) and (41d), the more specific term *σημεῖον* (*sign*) is used. We follow Burnet's suggestion of "comes to me," and, as Burnet points out, *θεῖον* and *δαιμόνιον* are here indistinguishable in meaning; the redundancy seems to this author to be for emphasis of the supernatural nature of the sign. Although *φωνή* occurs in all the manuscripts, we excise it as an interpolation: as Burnet points out, its addition, in apposition and placed so awkwardly at the end, would be harsh Greek. Were "a certain godlike and divine voice" meant, then the neuter *θεῖόν τι καὶ δαιμόνιον* would instead have been the feminine *θεία τις καὶ δαιμονία*, with *φωνή* following immediately.

[4]Literally, "which indeed Meletus, making a parody, also wrote in the indictment." As Burnet points out, this must be Socratic irony: there is no reason for such a thing to have been mentioned in the indictment as support for a charge of impiety, and if it were, then Socrates, even if he had opted not to explicitly defend himself against it, would certainly not now be using it as part of his defense. The sense must therefore be that of a sarcastic aside.

[5]Literally, "never turns toward," with "me" and the action about to be undertaken understood from the preceding clause.

[6]Though we have omitted it in rendering the first, *πάλαι* occurs in both clauses, with the sense that if Socrates had long ago attempted to become involved, he would long ago have perished, that is, would have no sooner become involved than perished.

[7]More literally (here and immediately below), "be saved"; we have rendered the future passive of *σώζω* (*save*) as *survive*.

Μεγάλα δ' ἔγωγε ὑμῖν τεκμήρια παρέξομαι τούτων, οὐ λόγους ἀλλ' ὃ ὑμεῖς τιμᾶτε, ἔργα. ἀκούσατε δή μοι τὰ συμβεβηκότα, ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι οὐδ' ἂν ἑνὶ ὑπεικάθοιμι παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον δείσας θάνατον, μὴ ὑπείκων δὲ ἀλλὰ κἂν ἀπολοίμην. ἐρῶ δὲ ὑμῖν φορτικὰ μὲν καὶ δικανικά, ἀληθῆ δέ. ἐγὼ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἄλλην μὲν ἀρχὴν (32b) *οὐδεμίαν πώποτε ἦρξα ἐν τῇ πόλει, ἐβούλευσα δέ· καὶ ἔτυχεν ἡμῶν ἡ φυλὴ Ἀντιοχὶς πρυτανεύουσα ὅτε ὑμεῖς τοὺς δέκα στρατηγοὺς τοὺς οὐκ ἀνελομένους τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ναυμαχίας ἐβουλεύσασθε ἀθρόους κρίνειν, παρανόμως, ὡς ἐν τῷ ὑστέρῳ χρόνῳ πᾶσιν ὑμῖν ἔδοξεν. τότ' ἐγὼ μόνος τῶν πρυτάνεων ἠναντιώθην ὑμῖν μηδὲν ποιεῖν παρὰ τοὺς νόμους καὶ ἐναντία ἐψηφισάμην· καὶ ἑτοίμων ὄντων ἐνδεικνύναι με καὶ ἀπάγειν τῶν ῥητόρων, καὶ ὑμῶν κελευόντων καὶ βοώντων, μετὰ τοῦ* (32c) *νόμου καὶ τοῦ δικαίου ᾤμην μᾶλλόν με δεῖν διακινδυνεύειν ἢ μεθ' ὑμῶν γενέσθαι μὴ δίκαια βουλευομένων, φοβηθέντα δεσμὸν ἢ θάνατον. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἦν ἔτι δημοκρατουμένης τῆς πόλεως· ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὀλιγαρχία ἐγένετο, οἱ τριάκοντα αὖ μεταπεμψάμενοί με πέμπτον αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν θόλον προσέταξαν ἀγαγεῖν ἐκ Σαλαμῖνος Λέοντα τὸν Σαλαμίνιον ἵνα ἀποθάνοι, οἷα δὴ καὶ ἄλλοις ἐκεῖνοι πολλοῖς πολλὰ προσέταττον, βουλόμενοι ὡς πλείστους ἀναπλῆσαι αἰτιῶν. τότε μέντοι ἐγὼ* (32d) *οὐ λόγῳ ἀλλ' ἔργῳ αὖ ἐνεδειξάμην ὅτι ἐμοὶ θανάτου μὲν μέλει, εἰ μὴ ἀγροικότερον ἦν εἰπεῖν, οὐδ' ὁτιοῦν, τοῦ δὲ μηδὲν ἄδικον μηδ' ἀνόσιον ἐργάζεσθαι, τούτου δὲ τὸ πᾶν μέλει. ἐμὲ γὰρ ἐκείνη ἡ ἀρχὴ οὐκ ἐξέπληξεν, οὕτως ἰσχυρὰ οὖσα, ὥστε ἄδικόν τι ἐργάσασθαι, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ ἐκ τῆς θόλου ἐξήλθομεν, οἱ μὲν τέτταρες ᾤχοντο εἰς Σαλαμῖνα καὶ ἤγαγον Λέοντα, ἐγὼ δὲ ᾠχόμην ἀπιὼν οἴκαδε. καὶ ἴσως ἂν διὰ ταῦτα ἀπέθανον, εἰ μὴ ἡ ἀρχὴ διὰ ταχέων κατελύθη. καὶ* (32e) *τούτων ὑμῖν ἔσονται πολλοὶ μάρτυρες.*

And I will supply for you great proof of this, not words, but what you esteem, deeds.[1] Hear what happened to me, so that you may know that I would not, fearing death, yield to anyone[2] contrary to what is just, not yielding even if I should perish. And I will be telling you vulgar commonplaces of the law-courts,[3] but true. For I, men of Athens, never held any other office, but once served as a councilman.[4] And my district Antiochis happened to be in prytany when you planned to judge the ten admirals not gathering the casualties from the sea battle *en masse*,[5] contrary to law, as at a later time it seemed to you all. At that time I alone of the prytanes opposed your doing anything contrary to the laws and voted in opposition. And, speakers being ready to denounce me and have me led away,[6] and you urging and howling, I thought it necessary that I rather run the risk of being on the side of the law and the just than, fearing prison or death, be among you who were planning unjust things.[7] And this when the city was still a democracy. And after the oligarchy arose, the Thirty, summoning me and four others[8] to the Tholos, in turn ordered us to lead Leon the Salaminian from Salamis to be put to death, many of which sort of things they bid also many others, wishing to infect as many as possible with culpability.[9] To be sure I then showed again, not in word but in deed, that I was concerned about death, if it were not to speak too crudely, not a damn,[10] but to do nothing unjust or impious, this was my whole concern. For that regime,[11] being so strong, did not infect me so as to do anything wrong, but after we left the Tholos, the four went to Salamis and led away Leon, and I went home.[12] And perhaps I would have been put to death on this account, had not the regime swiftly dissolved. And you will find many to bear witness to you of these things.[13]

[1]On λόγοι (*words*) versus ἔργα (*deeds*), see fn.5 on p.2.

[2]As Burnet points out, the striking separation of οὐδενὶ ἄν into οὐδ' ἄν ἑνὶ gives great emphasis to the "not anyone."

[3]LSJ: φορτικός = *burdensome*, *wearisome*; *coarse*, *vulgar*, *common*, and δικανικός is used of anything having to do with the law or the courts. We here follow Burnet's suggested translation. The sense is that the story Socrates is about to tell is typical of what one hears in court cases.

[4]That is, was one of the 500 who served as βουλευταί on the governing council known as the βουλή. There were 10 districts (φυλαί), each of these comprised of a city, a rural, and a seaside region. The 50 councilmen from each district rotated through an executive council, each serving for one of the ten Attic months of the year, during which time they dined in a building known as the θόλος (*Rotunda*) and were said to be in prytany and to serve (πρυτανεύω) as prytanes (πρυτάνεις). To this author, Socrates seems to be saying that this was his only public office, but Burnet argues that the phrasing does not preclude his having served more than once and that this was the second occasion on which he served as a βουλευτής.

[5]*Planned* here in the sense of a resolution of the council. "The casualties" is not expressed in the Greek but has to be supplied in English. The details of incident to which Socrates refers, the trial of the generals accused of not recovering the dead after the battle of Arginusai, need not concern us here beyond its being an illustration of the kind of lawless mob rule, stirred up by anger over a public misfortune and a lust for retribution against anyone it was convenient to blame, that has done in so many just and reasonable persons throughout history.

[6]ἐνδεικνύναι ... καὶ ἀπάγειν are legal technical terms; Burnet renders "to lay information against me and have me summarily arrested."

[7]Literally, "things not just/right."

[8]Literally, "me [as a] fifth."

[9]The Thirty had sought to involve as many Athenians as possible in their misdeeds, and Socrates was here risking reminding some of the jurors of their own complicity during that period. But, as Burnet points out, his conduct on this occasion was his best defense against one of the principal unspoken grounds for bringing him to trial: that his loyalty to the democracy was, by association, suspect.

[10]LSJ: ἄγροικος (here in the comparative degree) has the root sense of *rustic*, and hence *boorish*, *rude*. "Not a damn" has a slight impoliteness not present in the Greek, but rendering οὐδ' ὁτιοῦν more accurately by the archaic "not a whit" seemed even less ideal.

[11]ἀρχή can mean *government*, *authority*, *power* in any of many, mostly more neutral, senses; we have chosen *regime* as best reflecting the nature of the oligarchy.

[12]Literally, "and I, going away, went home."

[13]Literally, "and of these things there will be for you many witnesses."

Ἆρ᾽ οὖν ἄν με οἴεσθε τοσάδε ἔτη διαγενέσθαι εἰ ἔπραττον τὰ δημόσια, καὶ πράττων ἀξίως ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ ἐβοήθουν τοῖς δικαίοις καὶ ὥσπερ χρὴ τοῦτο περὶ πλείστου ἐποιούμην; πολλοῦ γε δεῖ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν ἄλλος (33a) *ἀνθρώπων οὐδείς. ἀλλ᾽ ἐγὼ διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου δημοσίᾳ τε εἴ πού τι ἔπραξα τοιοῦτος φανοῦμαι, καὶ ἰδίᾳ ὁ αὐτὸς οὗτος, οὐδενὶ πώποτε συγχωρήσας οὐδὲν παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον οὔτε ἄλλῳ οὔτε τούτων οὐδενὶ οὓς δὴ διαβάλλοντες ἐμέ φασιν ἐμοὺς μαθητὰς εἶναι. ἐγὼ δὲ διδάσκαλος μὲν οὐδενὸς πώποτ᾽ ἐγενόμην· εἰ δέ τίς μου λέγοντος καὶ τὰ ἐμαυτοῦ πράττοντος ἐπιθυμοῖ ἀκούειν, εἴτε νεώτερος εἴτε πρεσβύτερος, οὐδενὶ πώποτε ἐφθόνησα, οὐδὲ χρήματα μὲν λαμβάνων διαλέγομαι* (33b) *μὴ λαμβάνων δὲ οὔ, ἀλλ᾽ ὁμοίως καὶ πλουσίῳ καὶ πένητι παρέχω ἐμαυτὸν ἐρωτᾶν, καὶ ἐάν τις βούληται ἀποκρινόμενος ἀκούειν ὧν ἂν λέγω. καὶ τούτων ἐγὼ εἴτε τις χρηστὸς γίγνεται εἴτε μή, οὐκ ἂν δικαίως τὴν αἰτίαν ὑπέχοιμι, ὧν μήτε ὑπεσχόμην μηδενὶ μηδὲν πώποτε μάθημα μήτε ἐδίδαξα· εἰ δέ τίς φησι παρ᾽ ἐμοῦ πώποτέ τι μαθεῖν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι ἰδίᾳ ὅτι μὴ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες, εὖ ἴστε ὅτι οὐκ ἀληθῆ λέγει.*

Now do you think that I would have survived for so many years if I had been involved in public affairs,[1] and assisted the just[2] by acting in a manner worthy of a good man and, as one ought, put the greatest value on this? Far from it, men of Athens: for nor would any other man. But I throughout my whole life have been,[3] if I did anything at all,[4] both publicly such a person,[5] and privately the same person, never yielding at all to anyone contrary to what is just, especially to any of these ones,[6] whom they, maligning me,[7] say to be my students. And I was never anyone's teacher: but if anyone should wish to hear me speaking and going about my business,[8] whether young or old, I never begrudged anyone, and neither do I, taking money, converse nor do I, not taking it, not converse, but I supply myself for questioning[9] alike to rich and poor, and likewise if[10] anyone wishes to hear what I say in reply. And whether any of these persons be worthy[11] or not, I would not justly bear the responsibility, none of whom I ever gave any lesson to or taught. And if anyone says he ever received any lesson from me[12] or heard something privately that everyone else did not, know well that he does not speak the truth.

[1]Literally, "done the public [affairs]."

[2]*τοῖς δικαίοις* could be neuter or masculine, but its use with the verb *βοηθέω* makes clear that it refers to persons.

[3]Literally, "will appear," that is, if one examines what he has done publicly and privately throughout his life. This might also have been rendered "have manifestly been."

[4]*που* here has the sense "in any degree," and hence "at all."

[5]Though the resulting English is somewhat awkward, we have adhered closely to the Greek here. "Such a person" is explained by "never yielding . . . ."

[6]Literally, "neither to another nor to any of these persons," which is a common Greek periphrasis for "especially."

[7]On *malign* for διαβάλλοντες, see fn.2 on p.5.

[8]In the sense of his going around questioning others on behalf of the oracle. In *τὰ ἐμαυτοῦ πράττοντος*, the noun that would go with *τά* is quite naturally omitted in Greek but required in English; literally, "doing/tending to the [things] of myself." "Doing my thing" would be accurate but far too informal.

[9]There is some difference of opinion as to whether *ἐρωτᾶν* should be read in an active or passive sense — to question, or to be questioned — , but Burnet argues convincingly that Socrates is here referring to offering to be questioned by others.

[10]Literally, simply "and if," with "supply myself" to be understood.

[11]*χρηστός* has the basic sense *serviceable*, *good of its kind*, which then comes to mean *good* in a moral sense and, used of persons, *good*, *honest*, *worthy*.

[12]Literally, "learned anything from me," but in context this is referring to learning in the sense of being taught or receiving lessons.

Ἀλλὰ διὰ τί δή ποτε μετ' ἐμοῦ χαίρουσί τινες πολὺν (33c) χρόνον διατρίβοντες; ἀκηκόατε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πᾶσαν ὑμῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐγὼ εἶπον· ὅτι ἀκούοντες χαίρουσιν ἐξεταζομένοις τοῖς οἰομένοις μὲν εἶναι σοφοῖς, οὐσι δ' οὔ. ἔστι γὰρ οὐκ ἀηδές. ἐμοὶ δὲ τοῦτο, ὡς ἐγώ φημι, προστέτακται ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πράττειν καὶ ἐκ μαντείων καὶ ἐξ ἐνυπνίων καὶ παντὶ τρόπῳ ᾧπέρ τίς ποτε καὶ ἄλλη θεία μοῖρα ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ ὁτιοῦν προσέταξε πράττειν. ταῦτα, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ ἀληθῆ ἐστιν καὶ εὐέλεγκτα. εἰ γὰρ δὴ ἔγωγε τῶν νέων (33d) τοὺς μὲν διαφθείρω τοὺς δὲ διέφθαρκα, χρῆν δήπου, εἴτε τινὲς αὐτῶν πρεσβύτεροι γενόμενοι ἔγνωσαν ὅτι νέοις οὖσιν αὐτοῖς ἐγὼ κακὸν πώποτέ τι συνεβούλευσα, νυνὶ αὐτοὺς ἀναβαίνοντας ἐμοῦ κατηγορεῖν καὶ τιμωρεῖσθαι· εἰ δὲ μὴ αὐτοὶ ἤθελον, τῶν οἰκείων τινὰς τῶν ἐκείνων, πατέρας καὶ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἄλλους τοὺς προσήκοντας, εἴπερ ὑπ' ἐμοῦ τι κακὸν ἐπεπόνθεσαν αὐτῶν οἱ οἰκεῖοι, νῦν μεμνῆσθαι καὶ τιμωρεῖσθαι. πάντως δὲ πάρεισιν αὐτῶν πολλοὶ ἐνταυθοῖ οὓς ἐγὼ ὁρῶ, πρῶτον μὲν Κρίτων οὑτοσί, ἐμὸς ἡλικιώτης (33e) καὶ δημότης, Κριτοβούλου τοῦδε πατήρ, ἔπειτα Λυσανίας ὁ Σφήττιος, Αἰσχίνου τοῦδε πατήρ, ἔτι δ' Ἀντιφῶν ὁ Κηφισιεὺς οὑτοσί, Ἐπιγένους πατήρ, ἄλλοι τοίνυν οὗτοι ὧν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ διατριβῇ γεγόνασιν, Νικόστρατος Θεοζοτίδου, ἀδελφὸς Θεοδότου — καὶ ὁ μὲν Θεόδοτος τετελεύτηκεν, ὥστε οὐκ ἂν ἐκεῖνός γε αὐτοῦ καταδεηθείη — καὶ Παράλιος ὅδε, ὁ Δημοδόκου, οὗ ἦν Θεάγης ἀδελφός· ὅδε δὲ (34a) Ἀδείμαντος, ὁ Ἀρίστωνος, οὗ ἀδελφὸς οὑτοσὶ Πλάτων, καὶ Αἰαντόδωρος, οὗ Ἀπολλόδωρος ὅδε ἀδελφός. καὶ ἄλλους πολλοὺς ἐγὼ ἔχω ὑμῖν εἰπεῖν, ὧν τινα ἐχρῆν μάλιστα μὲν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ λόγῳ παρασχέσθαι Μέλητον μάρτυρα· εἰ δὲ τότε ἐπελάθετο, νῦν παρασχέσθω — ἐγὼ παραχωρῶ — καὶ λεγέτω εἴ τι ἔχει τοιοῦτον. ἀλλὰ τούτου πᾶν τοὐναντίον εὑρήσετε, ὦ ἄνδρες, πάντας ἐμοὶ βοηθεῖν ἑτοίμους τῷ διαφθείροντι, τῷ κακὰ ἐργαζομένῳ τοὺς οἰκείους αὐτῶν, ὥς φασι Μέλητος καὶ (34b) Ἄνυτος. αὐτοὶ μὲν γὰρ οἱ διεφθαρμένοι τάχ' ἂν λόγον ἔχοιεν βοηθοῦντες· οἱ δὲ ἀδιάφθαρτοι, πρεσβύτεροι ἤδη ἄνδρες, οἱ τούτων προσήκοντες, τίνα ἄλλον ἔχουσι λόγον βοηθοῦντες ἐμοὶ ἀλλ' ἢ τὸν ὀρθόν τε καὶ δίκαιον, ὅτι συνίασι Μελήτῳ μὲν ψευδομένῳ, ἐμοὶ δὲ ἀληθεύοντι;

But on what account, then, do some persons enjoy spending a great deal of time with me? You have heard, men of Athens; I have told the whole truth to you: it is because they enjoy hearing being examined those thinking themselves to be wise, but not being wise. For it is not unpleasant. And, as I say, I have been assigned to do this by the god and by the oracle and by dreams, and in every way in which any other divine lot ever assigned to anyone[1] to do anything whatever. These things, men of Athens, are true and easily put to the test. For if I corrupt some of the young, and have corrupted others, it is of course necessary, whether they themselves, having grown older, came to recognize that I ever gave any bad advice to them when they were younger, that they now come up to accuse me and get retribution. And if they themselves are unwilling, that some of their household, fathers and brothers and other relations, if any of their household suffered any ill at my hands, now remember and take retribution. And altogether many of them, whom I see, are present here: first, Kriton here,[2] my age-mate and demesman, father of Kritoboulos here; next, Lusanias the Sphettian, father of Aischines here; and further, Antiphon the Kephisian here, father of Epigenes; then these whose brothers have spent their time with me in this way,[3] Nikostratos, son of Theozotides, brother of Theodotos — and Theodotos has died, so that he could not be deprecated by him[4] — and Paralios here, son of Demodokos, whose brother was Theages; and Adeimantos here, the son of Ariston, brother of Plato here,[5] and Aiantodoros, whose brother is Apollodoros here. And I could name for you many others, some one of whom it was certainly necessary that Meletus in his own presentation[6] supply as a witness: and if he forgot then, let him call them[7] now — I yield — and let him say whether he has any such evidence.[8] But altogether the contrary of this, men, you will find that they are all ready to assist me, the one corrupting, the one working ill on those of their household, as Meletus and Anytus assert. For perhaps the ones themselves corrupted would have some excuse for assisting me, but their uncorrupted relatives, already being older men, what other rationale do they have for assisting me but the right and just one, that they know that Meletus is lying and I am telling the truth?[9]

[1]While ἄνθρωπος has the root sense *man*, it is also the word that would be used more generally for a *human*, and here a contrast with the divine is clearly intended. But "to a human" seemed to jarring, and "to a mortal" too great a liberty.

[2]οὑτοσί (*this one here*) indicating that Kriton was present. See the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41. The demonstratives τοῦδε (literally, *this [one]*) and the other simple demonstratives that follow, while lacking the deictic iota, serve to indicate that Kritoboulos, etc., were also present. A δημότης (*demesman*) was a member of the same δῆμος; each of the ten φυλαί (*districts*; see fn.4 on p.25) was subdivided in ten δῆμοι (*demes*). Kriton (more conventionally, Crito) was, along with Socrates, the principal character of the *Crito*, the dialogue that follows the *Apology*. A very wealthy man, Kriton offers to bribe Socrates's guards and secret him safely away, an offer that Socrates, after discussion of the social contract and an imagined dialogue with a personification of the laws, declines as unjust.

[3]LSJ: διατριβή is a manner of passing time, ranging from *pastime*, *amusement* to *employment*, *study* to *a way of life/living*. Here it has the latter senses. We have adopted Burnet's suggested rendering of ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ διατριβῇ γεγόνασιν (literally, "were/have been in this διατριβή"), including the "with me," which, while absent in the Greek, seems necessary to accurately convey its sense in English.

[4]That is, Theodotos could not plead with Nikostratos not to testify against Socrates.

[5]By this, and even more emphatically in (38b) below, Plato makes clear that he was present at the trial.

[6]More literally, *speech*.

[7]The object of παρασχέσθω is unexpressed in the Greek.

[8]Literally, "any such [thing]."

[9]Meaning that while those Socrates had allegedly corrupted might support him only because their judgement had been corrupted, their uncorrupted relatives, having already reached an age of mature discernment, would support him only because it was right and just. λόγος here has the sense of an explanation, rationale, or way of accounting for. We have rendered λόγον ἔχοιεν and ἔχουσι λόγον with the same personal construction as the Greek; in English, the impersonal construction would be more natural: "There might be some excuse for the ones themselves corrupted to assist me, but … what other explanation could there be for their uncorrupted relatives …."

Εἶεν δή, ὦ ἄνδρες, ἃ μὲν ἐγὼ ἔχοιμ' ἂν ἀπολογεῖσθαι, σχεδόν ἐστι ταῦτα καὶ ἄλλα ἴσως τοιαῦτα. τάχα δ' ἄν τις (34c) *ὑμῶν ἀγανακτήσειεν ἀναμνησθεὶς ἑαυτοῦ, εἰ ὁ μὲν καὶ ἐλάττω τουτουὶ τοῦ ἀγῶνος ἀγῶνα ἀγωνιζόμενος ἐδεήθη τε καὶ ἱκέτευσε τοὺς δικαστὰς μετὰ πολλῶν δακρύων, παιδία τε αὑτοῦ ἀναβιβασάμενος ἵνα ὅτι μάλιστα ἐλεηθείη, καὶ ἄλλους τῶν οἰκείων καὶ φίλων πολλούς, ἐγὼ δὲ οὐδὲν ἄρα τούτων ποιήσω, καὶ ταῦτα κινδυνεύων, ὡς ἂν δόξαιμι, τὸν ἔσχατον κίνδυνον. τάχ' ἂν οὖν τις ταῦτα ἐννοήσας αὐθαδέστερον ἂν πρός με σχοίη καὶ ὀργισθεὶς αὐτοῖς τούτοις θεῖτο ἂν μετ'* (34d) *ὀργῆς τὴν ψῆφον. εἰ δή τις ὑμῶν οὕτως ἔχει – οὐκ ἀξιῶ μὲν γὰρ ἔγωγε, εἰ δ' οὖν – ἐπιεικῆ ἄν μοι δοκῶ πρὸς τοῦτον λέγειν λέγων ὅτι "ἐμοί, ὦ ἄριστε, εἰσὶν μέν πού τινες καὶ οἰκεῖοι· καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο αὐτὸ τὸ τοῦ Ὁμήρου, οὐδ' ἐγὼ "ἀπὸ δρυὸς οὐδ' ἀπὸ πέτρης" πέφυκα ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, ὥστε καὶ οἰκεῖοί μοί εἰσι καὶ υἱῆς γε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τρεῖς, εἷς μὲν μειράκιον ἤδη, δύο δὲ παιδία· ἀλλ' ὅμως οὐδένα αὐτῶν δεῦρο ἀναβιβασάμενος δεήσομαι ὑμῶν ἀποψηφίσασθαι." τί δὴ οὖν οὐδὲν τούτων ποιήσω; οὐκ αὐθαδιζόμενος, ὦ ἄνδρες* (34e) *Ἀθηναῖοι, οὐδ' ὑμᾶς ἀτιμάζων, ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν θαρραλέως ἐγὼ ἔχω πρὸς θάνατον ἢ μή, ἄλλος λόγος, πρὸς δ' οὖν δόξαν καὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ ὑμῖν καὶ ὅλῃ τῇ πόλει οὔ μοι δοκεῖ καλὸν εἶναι ἐμὲ τούτων οὐδὲν ποιεῖν καὶ τηλικόνδε ὄντα καὶ τοῦτο τοὔνομα ἔχοντα, εἴτ' οὖν ἀληθὲς εἴτ' οὖν ψεῦδος, ἀλλ'*

Very well, men, what I might be able to say in my defense are pretty much these and perhaps other such things. Now perhaps someone among you might be angry, remembering himself, if he,[1] contesting even a lesser case than this one, begged and pleaded the jurors with many tears, calling up his children to be as pitiable as possible, and others of his household and many friends, while I will do none of these things, and at that running, as it would seem,[2] the most extreme risk.[3] Now perhaps having this in mind someone would be rash concerning me and being angered at these very things would cast his vote with his anger. If indeed someone among you is so disposed[4] — I don't think it likely, but just supposing[5] — it seems to me that I would reasonably say to him,[6] "I also, my good man, have some members in my household;[7] for as Homer says,[8] I am not sprung 'from oak or rock'[9] but from people,[10] so that I also have householders and, men of Athens, three sons, one already a teenager, and two boys, but I will nevertheless not,[11] leading any of them here, beg of you to vote for acquittal." Now, why will I not do any of these things? Not being stubborn, men of Athens, nor yet dishonoring you, and[12] whether I am courageous in the face of death or not is another matter,[13] but it does not seem to me to be good with regard to my repute or yours or the city's that I do any of these things, both being of such an age and having the reputation that I do,[14] whether true or false,[15] but

[1] A *μέν … δέ* construction expressing constrast. The *μέν* of *εἰ ὁ μέν* is answered by the *ἐγὼ δέ* several lines below.

[2] The Greek idiomatically prefers the personal construction where the English would always use the impersonal: literally, "as I might seem."

[3] Alluding to the case being a capital one. This is yet another case of Socrates simply telling it like it is, without regard for the personal consequences: in explaining why he will not make the common appeal for mercy — which would also of course be inconsistent with his contention that, far from having done any wrong, he has actually been benefitting the Athenians — , he was sure to arouse animosity in those members of the jury who had behaved as he describes.

[4] Literally, *οὕτως ἔχει* = is so, is thus, is in this state.

[5] Literally, "for [in the explanatory sense: v. Denn. *μὲν γάρ … δέ* (under *γάρ* III.9.i)] I do not deem it so/likely, but now [in the inferential sense] …."

[6] Literally, "I seem to me to say reasonable things to that one, saying that …." Again, the Greek uses the personal construction (*μοι δοκῶ* = *I seem to me*) where English uses the impersonal (*it seems to me*), and also differs from English in not finding the repetition *λέγειν λέγων* (*to say, saying*) awkward and in preceding even a direct quotation by the conjunction *ὅτι* (*that*).

[7] The sense of *πού* is *I think/suppose/imagine*, but all of these seemed too strong and we have therefore simply not translated it.

[8] Literally, "for also this very [verse] of Homer's."

[9] Burnet cites Homer's *Odyssey* XIX.163.

[10] *ἄνθρωπος* and *ἀνήρ* both = *man*, but while the latter is *man* as opposed to *woman*, the former has more the sense of *human*.

[11] Literally, "leading none of them … will I beg …," but the negation is unambiguously of the main verb.

[12] Literally, *but*, but here, introducing *μέν … δέ* clauses, it is better rendered as *and*.

[13] *λόγος*: this might also be rendered "would be another discussion."

[14] Literally, "having this name/reputation" (*τοῦτο τοὔνομα*), that is, for being wise.

[15] *ἀληθές* is an adjective and *ψευδός* a noun, but Burnet points out that this inconsistency is common in this phrase.

οὖν δεδογμένον (35a) γέ ἐστί τῳ Σωκράτη διαφέρειν τῶν πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων. εἰ οὖν ὑμῶν οἱ δοκοῦντες διαφέρειν εἴτε σοφίᾳ εἴτε ἀνδρείᾳ εἴτε ἄλλῃ ἡτινιοῦν ἀρετῇ τοιοῦτοι ἔσονται, αἰσχρὸν ἂν εἴη· οἵουσπερ ἐγὼ πολλάκις ἑώρακά τινας ὅταν κρίνωνται, δοκοῦντας μέν τι εἶναι, θαυμάσια δὲ ἐργαζομένους, ὡς δεινόν τι οἰομένους πείσεσθαι εἰ ἀποθανοῦνται, ὥσπερ ἀθανάτων ἐσομένων ἂν ὑμεῖς αὐτοὺς μὴ ἀποκτείνητε· οἳ ἐμοὶ δοκοῦσιν αἰσχύνην τῇ πόλει περιάπτειν, ὥστ' ἄν τινα καὶ τῶν ξένων (35b) ὑπολαβεῖν ὅτι οἱ διαφέροντες Ἀθηναίων εἰς ἀρετήν, οὓς αὐτοὶ ἑαυτῶν ἔν τε ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις τιμαῖς προκρίνουσιν, οὗτοι γυναικῶν οὐδὲν διαφέρουσιν. ταῦτα γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, οὔτε ὑμᾶς χρὴ ποιεῖν τοὺς δοκοῦντας καὶ ὁπηοῦν τι εἶναι, οὔτ', ἂν ἡμεῖς ποιῶμεν, ὑμᾶς ἐπιτρέπειν, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸ ἐνδείκνυσθαι, ὅτι πολὺ μᾶλλον καταψηφιεῖσθε τοῦ τὰ ἐλεινὰ ταῦτα δράματα εἰσάγοντος καὶ καταγέλαστον τὴν πόλιν ποιοῦντος ἢ τοῦ ἡσυχίαν ἄγοντος.

at any rate[16] Socrates seeming[17] to surpass[18] in some degree[19] the majority of men. Now if those of you seeming[20] to excel either in wisdom or in courage or in any other virtue whatever will be like that,[21] it would be shameful — which very ones I have many times seen, when they are judged, while seeming to be something,[22] doing wondrous things, thinking that they are about to suffer something dreadful if they should die, as though they would be immortal if you did not put them to death — who seem to me to hang shame around the neck of the city,[23] so that even some foreigner would suppose[24] that the Athenians distinguished with regard to virtue, whom they themselves prefer in offices and other honors, are no better than women.[25] For, men of Athens, neither ought those of you seeming in any way whatever to be something do these things,[26] nor, if we should do them, ought you pay heed, but you ought rather point out this very thing: that you will much rather condemn one putting on these pitiable dramas[27] and making the city ridiculous than one keeping silent.

[16] *οὖν* occurs frequently in these lines, mostly adding a shade of modesty difficult to render explicitly into English, but here in its strongest sense and hence rendered explicitly as "at any rate."

[17] Literally, "having seemed" = "having been judged" in common opinion.

[18] *διαφέρω* can mean either simply to differ in a neutral sense or to surpass or excel. Burnet here renders it *surpass*, and that sense does indeed seem required in this context. But see fn.6 on p.20.

[19] *τῳ* could be read either as dative of degree of difference or dative of respect (*in some way/respect*). For consistency with earlier usage, we have chosen the former. See fn.7 on p.20.

[20] We have in this passage rendered the verb *δοκέω* as *seem*, but it is *seem* in the sense of having a reputation, of seeming or being judged so in common opinion.

[21] Literally, "be such ones," that is, the kind to put on pitiable displays and beg for mercy in court.

[22] That is, as noted just above, having the reputation of being worthy. This is the first occurrence of the phrase *τι εἶναι* (*to be something*, similar to the English idiom "to be somebody"), and though "be someone" would arguably be less awkward in English, we have chosen to adhere closely to the Greek. The phrase recurs in 41e; see fn.11 on p.40.

[23] As Burnet points out, the verb *περιάπτω* (to *fasten around*) was used for hanging necklaces and amulets around the neck.

[24] Literally, "someone even of the foreigners," that is, that even a stranger unfamiliar with Athenian society would have to reach this conclusion from just this observation alone. The construction is *ὥστε* (*so that*, *so as*) + infinitive to express natural result, with the *ἄν* indicating that the infinitive would, as a finite verb, have been a potential optative (Smythe §2270).

[25] Literally, "these ones not at all differ from/are superior to women," a statement to be regarded in the context of the historical epoch and culture.

[26] As just above, *τι εἶναι* = to have the reputation for "being someone," of seeming to be worthy. Literally, "it is morally necessary (*χρή*) that . . . ."

[27] As Burnet points out, *εἰσάγω* (*lead in*) is used both of bringing into court (as evidence or an argument) and of producing or putting on a dramatic performance. And here *καταψηφιεῖσθε* again clearly means *condemn* rather than *convict*. (See fn.9 on p.22.)

Χωρὶς δὲ τῆς δόξης, ὦ ἄνδρες, οὐδὲ δίκαιόν μοι δοκεῖ (35c) *εἶναι δεῖσθαι τοῦ δικαστοῦ οὐδὲ δεόμενον ἀποφεύγειν, ἀλλὰ διδάσκειν καὶ πείθειν. οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ τούτῳ κάθηται ὁ δικαστής, ἐπὶ τῷ καταχαρίζεσθαι τὰ δίκαια, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ κρίνειν ταῦτα· καὶ ὀμώμοκεν οὐ χαριεῖσθαι οἷς ἂν δοκῇ αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ δικάσειν κατὰ τοὺς νόμους. οὔκουν χρὴ οὔτε ἡμᾶς ἐθίζειν ὑμᾶς ἐπιορκεῖν οὔθ' ὑμᾶς ἐθίζεσθαι· οὐδέτεροι γὰρ ἂν ἡμῶν εὐσεβοῖεν. μὴ οὖν ἀξιοῦτέ με, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοιαῦτα δεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς πράττειν ἃ μήτε ἡγοῦμαι καλὰ εἶναι μήτε* (35d) *δίκαια μήτε ὅσια, ἄλλως τε μέντοι νὴ Δία πάντως καὶ ἀσεβείας φεύγοντα ὑπὸ Μελήτου τουτουΐ. σαφῶς γὰρ ἄν, εἰ πείθοιμι ὑμᾶς καὶ τῷ δεῖσθαι βιαζοίμην ὀμωμοκότας, θεοὺς ἂν διδάσκοιμι μὴ ἡγεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς εἶναι, καὶ ἀτεχνῶς ἀπολογούμενος κατηγοροίην ἂν ἐμαυτοῦ ὡς θεοὺς οὐ νομίζω. ἀλλὰ πολλοῦ δεῖ οὕτως ἔχειν· νομίζω τε γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ὡς οὐδεὶς τῶν ἐμῶν κατηγόρων, καὶ ὑμῖν ἐπιτρέπω καὶ τῷ θεῷ κρῖναι περὶ ἐμοῦ ὅπῃ μέλλει ἐμοί τε ἄριστα εἶναι καὶ ὑμῖν.*

This ends the defense presented by Socrates, following which the jury convicts him 280 to 220. There now follows the antitimesis: when the sentence for a case was not prescribed by law, both the prosecution and the defense would propose sentences, and the jury would decide which to impose. This part of Socrates's defense often seems arrogant and flippant on a first reading of the *Apology*, and certainly it struck the jurors as insulting — the vote to condemn was considerably more lopsided than the vote to convict. But to have proposed any sort of punishment would have been implicitly acknowledging the validity and legitimacy of the proceedings and charges brought by his accusers, when, as he himself explains, he was actually doing a great public service in his mission on behalf of the oracle, and in forgoing a livelihood for the benefit of the public he merited public support. He was, of course, as fully aware that his proposal would result in his being condemned as he was that he would be convicted. But while audacious and unyielding, Socrates was being neither arrogant nor flippant; his honesty, integrity, and devotion to what was right would not have allowed him to propose otherwise. Socrates's reasoning behind his conduct of his defense and the antitimesis, and the reasonableness and rightness of that conduct, will become much more clear in his discussion of the "divine sign" (*τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον*) and his explanation of events at the end of the dialogue (starting at 38c and particularly from 39e).

Apart from the question of reputation,[1] nor does it seem to me to be just to beseech of a juror to be acquitted — nor yet for a juror,[2] being beseeched, to acquit — , but rather to teach and to persuade.[3] For the juror is not seated on condition of bestowing justice as a favor, but of judging what is just:[4] and he has sworn not to favor those whom it seems good to him to favor, but rather to judge according to the laws. Therefore neither ought we to accustom you to forswear nor you to become accustomed:[5] for neither of us would be acting piously.[6] So do not deem it necessary, men of Athens, that I do before you such things as I believe to be neither virtuous[7] nor just nor holy,[8] especially by Zeus when I am defending a charge of impiety at the hands of Meletus here.[9] For clearly, if I should by begging persuade and press you who have sworn an oath,[10] I would be teaching you to believe that there aren't gods,[11] and in defending myself would simply accuse myself of not revering gods.[12] But it is far from being so: for I do believe,[13] men of Athens, as no one of my accusers does, and I trust to you and to the god to judge concerning me in the way that will be best both for me and for you.[14]

[1]Literally, "apart from the reputation," referring back to what Socrates has just said about the opinion foreigners would hold of the Athenians.

[2]The Greek reads simply "being beseeched, to acquit," with "juror" being clear from context but omitted quite naturally in Greek.

[3]That is, what is just is for the defendant rather to teach and persuade the jurors of what is just. The dashes have been added to make this more clear.

[4]Literally, "on this condition, [to wit,] on condition of bestowing justice (*τὰ δίκαια*) as a favor, but on condition of judging these things (*ταῦτα*)," with *ταῦτα* referring to *τὰ δίκαια*.

[5]As above, the Greek *χρή* expresses moral necessity — as opposed to the verb *δεῖ* in the next sentence, which expresses actual necessity.

[6]LSJ: *εὐσεβέω* = live or act piously and religiously. The statement is both a plain expression of Socratic belief and a very consciously ironic allusion to the charges against Socrates, as the immediately following makes clear.

[7]*ἀγαθός*, the general adjective for *good*, may also have the more specific sense of *morally good*. Here Socrates uses *καλός*, which, while also generically used for *good*, has a root sense of *beautiful* and hence may, as in this context, mean *morally beautiful*, *virtuous*.

[8]Burnet takes *ὅσια* to refer to the religious nature of the oath taken by jurors.

[9]For *τουτουΐ*, see the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41. More literally, *ἄλλως τε μέντοι νὴ Δία πάντως καὶ* = "especially to be sure by Zeus altogether," but, at a loss to convey the extreme emphasis of the Greek without clumsiness in English, we have rendered it merely as "especially by Zeus."

[10]Literally, "if I should persuade you and by begging press [you] having sworn": the ordering of the words seems intended to reflect speech that is not just extemporaneous, but hastened by emotion. We agree with Burnet that, as Socrates has just pointed out that teaching and persuading are what a defendant should justly do, *τῷ δεῖσθαι* (*by begging/beseeching*) must be taken with both *πείθοιμι* (*persuade*) and *βιαζοίμην* (*press*, with a notion of force or compulsion), but we do not, as Burnet, see *τῷ δεῖσθαι* with *βιαζοίμην* as oxymoronic.

[11]One could take the negative *μή* with either *ἡγεῖσθαι* or *εἶναι*: "not to believe that there are gods" or "believe that there are not gods."

[12]On *νομίζω*, see fn.33 on p.15 and fn.7 on p.3.

[13]Although there is no explicit *εἶναι* with *νομίζω*, here the sense of *νομίζω* is clearly *believe* — Socrates is, for cogency, speaking with an elliptical brevity. The *τε* is paired with the *καί* in *καὶ ὑμῖν*: literally, "I both believe … and trust …."

[14]We have rendered *μέλλει … ἄριστα εἶναι* as a simple future ("will be best"), but it is not a simple future in Greek: the verb *μέλλει* (*is about to*) often conveys a notion not just of futurity, but of thought, intention, or even destiny.

(35e) *τὸ μὲν μὴ ἀγανακτεῖν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἐπὶ τούτῳ* **(36a)** *τῷ γεγονότι, ὅτι μου κατεψηφίσασθε, ἄλλα τέ μοι πολλὰ συμβάλλεται, καὶ οὐκ ἀνέλπιστόν μοι γέγονεν τὸ γεγονὸς τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον θαυμάζω ἑκατέρων τῶν ψήφων τὸν γεγονότα ἀριθμόν. οὐ γὰρ ᾠόμην ἔγωγε οὕτω παρ' ὀλίγον ἔσεσθαι ἀλλὰ παρὰ πολύ· νῦν δέ, ὡς ἔοικεν, εἰ τριάκοντα μόναι μετέπεσον τῶν ψήφων, ἀπεπεφεύγη ἄν. Μέλητον μὲν οὖν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκῶ, καὶ νῦν ἀποπέφευγα, καὶ οὐ μόνον ἀποπέφευγα, ἀλλὰ παντὶ δῆλον τοῦτό γε, ὅτι εἰ μὴ ἀνέβη Ἄνυτος καὶ Λύκων κατηγορήσοντες ἐμοῦ, κἂν ὤφλε* **(36b)** *χιλίας δραχμάς, οὐ μεταλαβὼν τὸ πέμπτον μέρος τῶν ψήφων.*

Toward my not being upset,[1] men of Athens, at what has happened, namely, that you have convicted me,[2] both many other things contribute, and[3] what has happened is not without hope, but I much rather wonder at the actual count of the votes.[4] For I did not think it would be by a little but by a lot: but now, as it seems, if only thirty of the votes had fallen differently, I would have been acquitted.[5] And so,[6] as it seems, I have now both been acquitted of Meletus's charges,[7] and not only acquitted, but this is clear to everyone, that unless Anytus and Lykon had come to court accusing me,[8] he would, not having taken a fifth share of the votes, have owed a thousand drachmai.[9]

[1]*τὸ μὴ ἀγανακτεῖν*: an articular infinitive is the Greek equivalent of the English gerund, entirely similar to the German *das* + infinitive (and as with the German construct, though here only the negation *μή*, a great deal can in general come between the article and the infinitive). *ἀγανακτεῖν* is to be angry or upset, to have one's equanimity disturbed.

[2]Literally, "at this [thing] having [= that has] arisen," and so also *τὸ γεγονὸς τοῦτο* just below. The *ὅτι μου κατεψηφίσασθε* is an explanatory appositive; we have added "namely" in English to make this more clear. *κατεψηφίσασθε* here refers to the conviction, with the sentence yet to be decided. See fn.9 on p.22.

[3]There is here a marked anacoluthon: before completing the original grammatical construction, Socrates turns to and pursues another thought. We have omitted the *μοι* (*for me*) in this and the preceding clause: in a way that is natural in Greek, it indicates the person concerned, but would be unnaturally emphatic in English.

[4]Literally, "the count having arisen" and "of each of the two votes," meaning votes to convict and votes to acquit.

[5]This is how we know that the vote was 280 to 220.

[6]Denn. *μὲν οὖν* (I): "retrospective and transitional *οὖν* with prospective *μέν*."

[7]Literally, "acquitted of Meletus": *ἀποφεύγω* can be used not only, like the English *acquit*, absolutely or with the charge of which one is acquitted, but also with the person against whom one has secured acquittal.

[8]*ἀναβαίνω*, with the basic sense of *mount*, was, among numerous other meanings, the legal technical term for coming to or bringing a matter before the court. That a compound subject here follows the singular *ἀνέβην* is not significant.

[9]To discourage malicious and frivolous prosecutions, plaintiffs who did not secure a fifth of the votes of the jurors (in this case, 100 votes) were liable to this fine. Here the argument is that, with three accusers securing only 280 votes, this minimum had not been met. That this is of course not the way the accounting was done, and the argument therefore entirely specious, is irrelevant to the point that Socrates is ironically making.

Τιμᾶται δ' οὖν μοι ὁ ἀνὴρ θανάτου. εἶεν· ἐγὼ δὲ δὴ τίνος ὑμῖν ἀντι-
τιμήσομαι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι; ἢ δῆλον ὅτι τῆς ἀξίας; τί οὖν; τί ἄξιός
εἰμι παθεῖν ἢ ἀποτεῖσαι, ὅτι μαθὼν ἐν τῷ βίῳ οὐχ ἡσυχίαν ἦγον, ἀλλ'
ἀμελήσας ὧνπερ οἱ πολλοί, χρηματισμοῦ τε καὶ οἰκονομίας καὶ στρα-
τηγιῶν καὶ δημηγοριῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀρχῶν καὶ συνωμοσιῶν καὶ
στάσεων τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει γιγνομένων, ἡγησάμενος ἐμαυτὸν **(36c)** *τῷ*
ὄντι ἐπιεικέστερον εἶναι ἢ ὥστε εἰς ταῦτ' ἰόντα σῴζεσθαι, ἐνταῦθα μὲν
οὐκ ᾖα οἷ ἐλθὼν μήτε ὑμῖν μήτε ἐμαυτῷ ἔμελλον μηδὲν ὄφελος εἶναι,
ἐπὶ δὲ τὸ ἰδίᾳ ἕκαστον ἰὼν εὐεργετεῖν τὴν μεγίστην εὐεργεσίαν, ὡς ἐγώ
φημι, ἐνταῦθα ᾖα, ἐπιχειρῶν ἕκαστον ὑμῶν πείθειν μὴ πρότερον μήτε
τῶν ἑαυτοῦ μηδενὸς ἐπιμελεῖσθαι πρὶν ἑαυτοῦ ἐπιμεληθείη ὅπως ὡς
βέλτιστος καὶ φρονιμώτατος ἔσοιτο, μήτε τῶν τῆς πόλεως, πρὶν αὐτῆς
τῆς πόλεως, τῶν τε ἄλλων οὕτω κατὰ τὸν **(36d)** *αὐτὸν τρόπον ἐπι-*
μελεῖσθαι — τί οὖν εἰμι ἄξιος παθεῖν τοιοῦτος ὤν; ἀγαθόν τι, ὦ ἄνδρες
Ἀθηναῖοι, εἰ δεῖ γε κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τιμᾶσθαι· καὶ ταῦτά
γε ἀγαθὸν τοιοῦτον ὅτι ἂν πρέποι ἐμοί. τί οὖν πρέπει ἀνδρὶ πένητι
εὐεργέτῃ δεομένῳ ἄγειν σχολὴν ἐπὶ τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ παρακελεύσει; οὐκ ἔσθ'
ὅτι μᾶλλον, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πρέπει οὕτως ὡς τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα
ἐν πρυτανείῳ σιτεῖσθαι, πολύ γε μᾶλλον ἢ εἴ τις ὑμῶν ἵππῳ ἢ συνωρίδι
ἢ ζεύγει νενίκηκεν Ὀλυμπίασιν· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑμᾶς ποιεῖ εὐδαίμονας δο-
κεῖν εἶναι, ἐγὼ δὲ **(36e)** *εἶναι, καὶ ὁ μὲν τροφῆς οὐδὲν δεῖται, ἐγὼ δὲ*
δέομαι. εἰ οὖν δεῖ με κατὰ τὸ δίκαιον τῆς ἀξίας τιμᾶσθαι, τούτου **(37a)**
τιμῶμαι, ἐν πρυτανείῳ σιτήσεως.

Now, the man proposes for me a penalty of death. Very well: what shall I counterpropose,[1] men of Athens? Or is it clear that it should be my just deserts?[2] What do I deserve to have done to me or to pay, because[3] throughout my life I would not keep quiet, but being unconcerned with the things most people are concerned with,[4] making money and household management and military and civic and the other offices and political unions and factions arising in the city, believing myself to be in fact too reasonable[5] to survive involvement in these things,[6] I did not venture where[7] I was about to be of no benefit either to you or to myself, but going to each privately, went where I was about to do, as I think, the greatest good,[8] trying to persuade each of you not to be concerned with any of the things of himself[9] before he cares for himself, how he should be as good and wise as possible,[10] nor for the things of the city, before the city itself, and to be concerned for all the other things in this same way[11] — what now am I, being such a one, worthy to suffer? Something good, men of Athens, if it is truly necessary to assess according to my deserts; and at that, such a good as should befit me. Now, what befits a man, poor, a benefactor, being in need of time to spend encouraging you?[12] There is nothing, men of Athens, that more so befits such a man than to dine in the Prytaneion,[13] much more than if one of you has been victorious at the Olympics in horse or chariot or two-horse chariot racing: for the one makes you seem to be fortunate, but I to actually be fortunate,[14] and the one has no need of sustenance, while I am in need. Now if it is necessary that I assess my deserts justly,[15] I assess this, dining in the Prytaneion.

[1] *τιμᾶσθαι* and *ἀντιτιμᾶσθαι* are more precisely to *assess* and *counter-assess as a penalty/fine/sentence*.

[2] The Greek is elliptical: "that [it should be/I should counterpropose] *τῆς ἀξίας*," with *ἀξία* being one's desert(s) and the article *τῆς* a weak possessive adjective (*my*). We have added "just" as more natural to the English idiom.

[3] Literally, "what am I worthy to suffer or to pay [as a fine]": we have adopted Burnet's suggested rendering "have done to me." *ὅτι μάθων* is a baffling, mostly Platonic idiom, the meaning of which is nonetheless clear from the context of the four times that it appears in the extant literature; to quote Burnet: it "appears to mean *because* with an added sense of disapprobation or expostulation."

[4] Literally, "with which very things the many/majority [are]."

[5] *ἐπιεικέστερον*, the comparative of *ἐπιεικής*, is very difficult to render here by a single English word. LSJ gives a root sense of *fitting, meet, suitable* that becomes *reasonable, fair, equitable* and, used of persons in a moral sense, *reasonable, fair, kind, gentle, good*. Burnet suggests "good."

[6] Literally, "going to these things, to be saved."

[7] Literally, "I did not go there, going whither . . . ."

[8] Literally, "went there, [going whither I was about to] . . . ." *εὐεργετέω* is to do a good deed or service, and *εὐεργεσία* is the corresponding substantive (*a good deed, service*); the repetition is natural in Greek but would be awkward in English. The root sense of *φημί* is *say, assert*, from which it then derives the senses *think, deem, suppose*.

[9] That is, one's property, possessions, or even external circumstances.

[10] *βέλτιστος* is the superlative of *good* in a moral sense. *φρόνιμος* = *wise, prudent*.

[11] Literally, "thus, according to the same manner."

[12] That is, encouraging to be as good and wise as possible. Literally, "being in need of leisure for your encouragement." *σχολή* is usually translated as *leisure*, but means simply having time to spend, without the other connotations of the contemporary sense of *leisure*.

[13] In proposing the death penalty, the prosecution was reckoning that Socrates would propose exile, which was the outcome the prosecution really wanted.

Invitations to dine in the Prytaneion were extended to honored guests of the city, the equivalent of being invited to dinner at the White House — at least formerly, when that was an honor and the United States was a democracy under the rule of law.

[14] Literally simply "but I to be."

[15] *κατὰ τὸ δίκαιον* = "according to the just [thing]," "according to what is just."

Ἴσως οὖν ὑμῖν καὶ ταυτὶ λέγων παραπλησίως δοκῶ λέγειν ὥσπερ περὶ τοῦ οἴκτου καὶ τῆς ἀντιβολήσεως, ἀπαυθαδιζόμενος· τὸ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοιοῦτον ἀλλὰ τοιόνδε μᾶλλον. πέπεισμαι ἐγὼ ἑκὼν εἶναι μηδένα ἀδικεῖν ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς τοῦτο οὐ πείθω· ὀλίγον γὰρ χρόνον ἀλλήλοις διειλέγμεθα. ἐπεί, ὡς ἐγῷμαι, εἰ ἦν ὑμῖν νόμος, ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις, περὶ θανάτου μὴ μίαν ἡμέραν (37b) μόνον κρίνειν ἀλλὰ πολλάς, ἐπείσθητε ἄν· νῦν δ' οὐ ῥᾴδιον ἐν χρόνῳ ὀλίγῳ μεγάλας διαβολὰς ἀπολύεσθαι. πεπεισμένος δὴ ἐγὼ μηδένα ἀδικεῖν πολλοῦ δέω ἐμαυτόν γε ἀδικήσειν καὶ κατ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἐρεῖν αὐτὸς ὡς ἄξιός εἰμί του κακοῦ καὶ τιμήσεσθαι τοιούτου τινὸς ἐμαυτῷ. τί δείσας; ἦ μὴ πάθω τοῦτο οὗ Μέλητός μοι τιμᾶται, ὅ φημι οὐκ εἰδέναι οὔτ' εἰ ἀγαθὸν οὔτ' εἰ κακόν ἐστιν; ἀντὶ τούτου δὴ ἕλωμαι ὢν εὖ οἶδά τι κακῶν ὄντων τούτου τιμησάμενος; πότερον δεσμοῦ; (37c) καὶ τί με δεῖ ζῆν ἐν δεσμωτηρίῳ, δουλεύοντα τῇ ἀεὶ καθισταμένῃ ἀρχῇ, τοῖς ἕνδεκα; ἀλλὰ χρημάτων καὶ δεδέσθαι ἕως ἂν ἐκτείσω; ἀλλὰ ταὐτόν μοί ἐστιν ὅπερ νυνδὴ ἔλεγον· οὐ γὰρ ἔστι μοι χρήματα ὁπόθεν ἐκτείσω. ἀλλὰ δὴ φυγῆς τιμήσωμαι; ἴσως γὰρ ἄν μοι τούτου τιμήσαιτε. πολλὴ μεντἄν με φιλοψυχία ἔχοι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, εἰ οὕτως ἀλόγιστός εἰμι ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι λογίζεσθαι ὅτι ὑμεῖς μὲν ὄντες πολῖταί μου οὐχ οἷοί τε ἐγένεσθε ἐνεγκεῖν τὰς ἐμὰς (37d) διατριβὰς καὶ τοὺς λόγους, ἀλλ' ὑμῖν βαρύτεραι γεγόνασιν καὶ ἐπιφθονώτεραι, ὥστε ζητεῖτε αὐτῶν νυνὶ ἀπαλλαγῆναι· ἄλλοι δὲ ἄρα αὐτὰς οἴσουσι ῥᾳδίως; πολλοῦ γε δεῖ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι. καλὸς οὖν ἄν μοι ὁ βίος εἴη ἐξελθόντι τηλικῷδε ἀνθρώπῳ ἄλλην ἐξ ἄλλης πόλεως ἀμειβομένῳ καὶ ἐξελαυνομένῳ ζῆν. εὖ γὰρ οἶδ' ὅτι ὅποι ἂν ἔλθω, λέγοντος ἐμοῦ ἀκροάσονται οἱ νέοι ὥσπερ ἐνθάδε· κἂν μὲν τούτους ἀπελαύνω, οὗτοί με αὐτοὶ ἐξελῶσι πείθοντες τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους· (37e) ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀπελαύνω, οἱ τούτων πατέρες δὲ καὶ οἰκεῖοι δι' αὐτοὺς τούτους.

Now saying these things I perhaps also seem to you to speak about the same as about pity and pleading,[1] brazenly.[2] But in fact it is not like that, men of Athens, but rather like this:[3] I am convinced that I willingly wrong no one,[4] but I am not persuading you of this. For we have conversed with each other only[5] for a short time. Because, I think, if it were our custom,[6] just as to other men,[7] to deliberate capital cases[8] not just for one day but for many, you would be persuaded; but now it is not easy to dissolve great prejudices in a short time. And convinced to wrong no one, I am far from being about to wrong myself and myself to say that I deserve some ill against myself and to assess some such penalty for myself. Fearing what? Am I not to suffer that which Meletus assesses for me, which I say I do not know whether it is good or bad? Instead of this am I to choose something I know well to be bad and to assess this penalty?[9] Imprisonment? And why is it necessary that I live in prison, being a slave to the powers that be at any given time, the Eleven?[10] Or a fine and[11] to be imprisoned until I pay? But for me it is the same as I was just now saying: for I don't have money by which to pay. Or[12] am I to assess a penalty of exile? For perhaps you would assess this penalty for me. To be sure a great love of life[13] would possess me, men of Athens, if I am so senseless[14] as not to be able to reckon that you, being my fellow citizens, were not able to bear my way of life[15] and my words, but they were very burdensome and odious[16] to you, so that you now seek to be rid of them, but then others will bear them easily? Far from it, men of Athens. Now it would be a fine life for me going away, a man of my age, to live exchanging one city for another and being driven out. For I know well that wherever I go, the young, just as here, will listen to me conversing. And if I drive them away, they themselves, persuading their elders, will drive me away; and if I do not drive them away, their fathers and members of their households will on their account.

[1] Above in (34c).

[2] We have rendered the participle ἀπαυθαδιζόμενος as an adverb. ἀπαυθαδίζομαι is to speak boldly, with, if anything, the sense of speaking over-boldly.

[3] Literally, "not such a thing [as that], but rather such a thing [as this]": τοιοῦτον refers to what precedes, τοιόνδε to what follows.

[4] Literally, "no one of men."

[5] *Only* is absent in the Greek, but is needed in English.

[6] νόμος here could be taken as any of *custom, practice, law.*

[7] Meaning the men of other cities.

[8] Literally, "to judge concerning death."

[9] Literally, "to choose something of which [things] I know well being bad, assessing this [as the] penalty?"

[10] Literally, "to the magistracy established at any given time." ἀεί (*always*) has the special sense of *at any given time* in these sorts of constructions. The Eleven were commissioners overseeing prisoners and the carrying out of sentences.

[11] Literally, "But rather money and . . . ."

[12] Again, literally "but."

[13] Meaning fear of death (in this case, fear of the death penalty).

[14] ἀλόγιστος = *senseless, irrational, without reason.*

[15] On διατριβή, see fn.3 on p.27.

[16] Lest a less than benign reader — to borrow from (34d), we don't think it likely, but just supposing — gleefully accuse us of not acknowledging Burnet in rendering the words βαρύτεραι and ἐπιφθονώτεραι as "burdensome" and "odious": we not only chose these words independently, but no idiot would think of rendering them otherwise, including the idiot who authored this translation.

Ἴσως οὖν ἄν τις εἴποι· "σιγῶν δὲ καὶ ἡσυχίαν ἄγων, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐχ οἷός τ' ἔσῃ ἡμῖν ἐξελθὼν ζῆν;" τουτὶ δή ἐστι πάντων χαλεπώτατον πεῖσαί τινας ὑμῶν. ἐάντε γὰρ λέγω ὅτι τῷ θεῷ ἀπειθεῖν τοῦτ' ἐστὶν καὶ διὰ τοῦτ' ἀδύνατον (38a) *ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν, οὐ πείσεσθέ μοι ὡς εἰρωνευομένῳ· ἐάντ' αὖ λέγω ὅτι καὶ τυγχάνει μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν ὂν ἀνθρώπῳ τοῦτο, ἑκάστης ἡμέρας περὶ ἀρετῆς τοὺς λόγους ποιεῖσθαι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων περὶ ὧν ὑμεῖς ἐμοῦ ἀκούετε διαλεγομένου καὶ ἐμαυτὸν καὶ ἄλλους ἐξετάζοντος, ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ, ταῦτα δ' ἔτι ἧττον πείσεσθέ μοi λέγοντι. τὰ δὲ ἔχει μὲν οὕτως, ὡς ἐγώ φημι, ὦ ἄνδρες, πείθειν δὲ οὐ ῥᾴδιον. καὶ ἐγὼ ἅμα οὐκ εἴθισμαι ἐμαυτὸν ἀξιοῦν κακοῦ* (38b) *οὐδενός. εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν μοι χρήματα, ἐτιμησάμην ἂν χρημάτων ὅσα ἔμελλον ἐκτείσειν, οὐδὲν γὰρ ἂν ἐβλάβην· νῦν δὲ οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν, εἰ μὴ ἄρα ὅσον ἂν ἐγὼ δυναίμην ἐκτεῖσαι, τοσούτου βούλεσθέ μοι τιμῆσαι. ἴσως δ' ἂν δυναίμην ἐκτεῖσαι ὑμῖν που μνᾶν ἀργυρίου· τοσούτου οὖν τιμῶμαι.*

Now perhaps someone might say, "But going away will you not be able to live being silent and keeping quiet, Socrates?"[1] Of this[2] it is hardest of all to persuade some of you. For if I say that this is to disobey the god and on this account it is impossible to keep quiet, you will not be persuaded by me on the grounds that I am dissembling. If in turn I say that this happens to be the greatest good for man, to hold converse each day about virtue and about the other things concerning which you hear me conversing and examining myself and others, and that the unexamined life is not worth living,[3] you will be persuaded still less by me saying this. But it is so, as I say, men, but it is not easy to persuade.[4] And at the same time I am not accustomed to deem myself worthy of any ill. If I had money,[5] I would have assessed a fine of an amount I would be able to pay,[6] for I would not be harmed. But I do not,[7] unless perhaps you wish to assess a fine of an amount I would be able to pay.[8] And perhaps I would be able to pay to you, I suppose, a mina of silver:[9] so I assess this great a fine.[10]

[1]The Greek includes a dative of reference (*ἡμῖν*, *for us*) that indicates the person in some more or less vague way interested in the action.

[2]The *τουτί* with deictic iota and the emphatic particle *δή* gives great emphasis.

[3]The critically important verbal adjective *βιωτός* is, together with the negative *οὐ*, almost universally translated as "not worth living," and so also in LSJ. But it could also be taken as "not to be lived" or even "not livable."

[4]We have chosen, though it is somewhat awkward in English, to follow the Greek in omitting the object of "persuade": it could be "you, men of Athens" or more general.

[5]We have omitted the *μὲν γάρ* in English: as Burnet points out, the *μὲν γάρ* is explanatory: Socrates is saying that he would be quite willing to pay a fine, as being deprived of a purely material thing would do him no harm. See the end note on epexegetic *γάρ* on p.41.

[6]Literally, "assessed a penalty of money, how much I would be about to pay."

[7]The construction is the same as the preceding *ἦν μοι χρήματα*, with *μοι χρήματα* omitted but understood.

[8]Literally, "assess [a fine] of so much, how much I would be able . . . ."

[9]A mina equalled 100 drachmai. While not insubstantial in everyday terms, in comparison to a death sentence this would have seemed to the jury grossly inadequate.

[10]Literally, "so I assess [a fine] of so much."

Πλάτων δὲ ὅδε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ Κρίτων καὶ Κριτόβουλος καὶ Ἀπολλόδωρος κελεύουσί με τριάκοντα μνῶν τιμήσασθαι, αὐτοὶ δ' ἐγγυᾶσθαι· τιμῶμαι οὖν τοσούτου, ἐγγυηταὶ δὲ ὑμῖν ἔσονται τοῦ ἀργυρίου οὗτοι ἀξιόχρεῳ.

Plato here,[1] men of Athens, and Kriton and Kritoboulos and Apollodoros urge me to assess a fine of thirty minæ, and they themselves to serve as guarantors. So I assess a fine of so much, and they will be sufficient guarantors of the silver for you.

[1]Literally, "this Plato."

This ends the antitimesis, after which the vote was, according to Burnet, 300 to 200 in favor of the death penalty. There follow brief words by Socrates addressed first to the full jury, then to his supporters. Burnet is among those who believe that these words were actually spoken at the trial, and he cites fairly convincing evidence for this, but whether spoken in court at the conclusion of the trial or composed from what Socrates said on a later occasion or occasions, this part of the *Apology* is surely an accurate account of Socrates thoughts about the trial.

(38c) οὐ πολλοῦ γ' ἕνεκα χρόνου, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ὄνομα ἕξετε καὶ αἰτίαν ὑπὸ τῶν βουλομένων τὴν πόλιν λοιδορεῖν ὡς Σωκράτη ἀπεκτόνατε, ἄνδρα σοφόν — φήσουσι γὰρ δὴ σοφὸν εἶναι, εἰ καὶ μή εἰμι, οἱ βουλόμενοι ὑμῖν ὀνειδίζειν — εἰ γοῦν περιεμείνατε ὀλίγον χρόνον, ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου ἂν ὑμῖν τοῦτο ἐγένετο· ὁρᾶτε γὰρ δὴ τὴν ἡλικίαν ὅτι πόρρω ἤδη ἐστὶ τοῦ βίου θανάτου δὲ ἐγγύς. λέγω δὲ τοῦτο οὐ (38d) πρὸς πάντας ὑμᾶς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τοὺς ἐμοῦ καταψηφισαμένους θάνατον. λέγω δὲ καὶ τόδε πρὸς τοὺς αὐτοὺς τούτους. ἴσως με οἴεσθε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἀπορίᾳ λόγων ἐαλωκέναι τοιούτων οἷς ἂν ὑμᾶς ἔπεισα, εἰ ᾤμην δεῖν ἄπαντα ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν ὥστε ἀποφυγεῖν τὴν δίκην. πολλοῦ γε δεῖ. ἀλλ' ἀπορίᾳ μὲν ἑάλωκα, οὐ μέντοι λόγων, ἀλλὰ τόλμης καὶ ἀναισχυντίας καὶ τοῦ μὴ ἐθέλειν λέγειν πρὸς ὑμᾶς τοιαῦτα οἵ' ἂν ὑμῖν μὲν ἥδιστα ἦν ἀκούειν — θρηνοῦντός τέ μου καὶ ὀδυρομένου καὶ ἄλλα ποιοῦντος καὶ (38e) λέγοντος πολλὰ καὶ ἀνάξια ἐμοῦ, ὡς ἐγὼ φημι, οἷα δὴ καὶ εἴθισθε ὑμεῖς τῶν ἄλλων ἀκούειν. ἀλλ' οὔτε τότε ᾠήθην δεῖν ἕνεκα τοῦ κινδύνου πρᾶξαι οὐδὲν ἀνελεύθερον, οὔτε νῦν μοι μεταμέλει οὕτως ἀπολογησαμένῳ, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον αἱροῦμαι ὧδε ἀπολογησάμενος τεθνάναι ἢ ἐκείνως ζῆν. οὔτε γὰρ ἐν δίκῃ οὔτ' ἐν πολέμῳ οὔτ' ἐμὲ οὔτ' ἄλλον οὐδένα δεῖ (39a) τοῦτο μηχανᾶσθαι, ὅπως ἀποφεύξεται πᾶν ποιῶν θάνατον. καὶ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς μάχαις πολλάκις δῆλον γίγνεται ὅτι τό γε ἀποθανεῖν ἄν τις ἐκφύγοι καὶ ὅπλα ἀφεὶς καὶ ἐφ' ἱκετείαν τραπόμενος τῶν διωκόντων· καὶ ἄλλαι μηχαναὶ πολλαί εἰσιν ἐν ἑκάστοις τοῖς κινδύνοις ὥστε διαφεύγειν θάνατον, ἐάν τις τολμᾷ πᾶν ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν. ἀλλὰ μὴ οὐ τοῦτ' ἦ χαλεπόν, ὦ ἄνδρες, θάνατον ἐκφυγεῖν, ἀλλὰ πολὺ χαλεπώτερον πονηρίαν· (39b) θᾶττον

For the sake of not much time,[1] men of Athens, you will have the reputation[2] and blame at the hands of those wishing to reproach the city that you put to death Socrates, a wise man — for those wishing to censure you will say that I am wise, even if I am not — at any rate if you had waited for a short time, this would have happened of its own accord:[3] for you see my age, that it is already far into life and near death. And I say this not to all of you, but to those having condemned me. And I say also this to these same ones: perhaps you think, men of Athens, that I was convicted by a loss for such words as would persuade you,[4] if I had thought it necessary to do and say all things to be acquitted of the charge.[5] Far from it. Rather,[6] I was convicted by a loss not, to be sure, of words, but of recklessness[7] and shamelessness and of willingness[8] to say to you the sort of things that would be sweetest for you to hear — me wailing and crying and doing and saying many other things unworthy of me,[9] as I think, things of the very sort that you are accustomed to hear from others.[10] But neither at that time did I deem it necessary because of the risk[11] to do anything servile, nor now do I regret having so defended myself, but I much rather choose to die having defended myself thus than to live having defended myself in that way.[12] For whether in court or in battle, it is necessary that neither I nor anyone else contrive how, doing everything, he will escape death.[13] For also in battle[14] it is often clear that someone might escape dying by[15] throwing away his weapons and turning in entreaty of those pursuing, and there are many other contrivances for escaping death from the various dangers,[16] if someone dare to do and say everything.[17] It is, men, perhaps not difficult to escape death,[18] but to escape wickedness is much more difficult.[19] For it runs more swiftly

[1]We have adhered closely to the Greek; a more idiomatically English translation might be "to buy just a little time."

[2]ὄνομα has the root sense of *name*, and hence the derived meaning *reputation*. See fn.5 on p.7.

[3]Literally, "this would have arisen for you of its own accord," with ὑμῖν (*for you*) indicating the person concerned.

[4]ἀπορία = *a being at a loss.* ἁλίσκομαι, with the basic sense of being seized or caught, was a legal technical term for being convicted. Literally, "at a loss for such words, by which I would have persuaded you."

[5]In more idiomatic English, "to do and say anything." ὥστε + the infinitive expresses natural (as opposed to actual) result: literally, "so as to be acquitted"; the sense is of doing and saying all things of such nature as would secure acquittal.

[6]Literally, "but rather."

[7]LSJ: τόλμα = *courage, boldness, daring* in a good sense, and in a bad sense *over-boldness, recklessness.*

[8]τοῦ μὴ ἐθέλειν λέγειν is an articular infinitive, equivalent to the gerund in English: literally, "of not being willing/refusing to say." Though negated, the sense, following the effectively negative ἀπορία, is positive: in Greek compound negatives reinforce, not negate, each other. So also with the repeated οὔτε ... οὔτε constructions just below.

[9]Literally, "many and other and unworthy of me": Greek tends to link quantifying adjectives by καί (*and*) where English would not.

[10]Literally, "the others."

[11]That is, of death.

[12]Literally, "to die having defended myself in this way than to live [having defended myself] in that way," meaning by acting in an untoward way. In the Greek, the contrast of ὧδε (*in this way*) with ἐκείνως (*in that way*) makes the repetition of "having defended myself" unnecessary.

[13]Literally, "contrive this, [namely,] how ...."

[14]Literally, "in the battles."

[15]Literally, "by both throwing away his weapons and ...," but the "both" would be clumsy in English.

[16]Literally, "there are many other contrivances, in the dangers taken each singly, so as to escape death." The ὥστε clause expresses natural result, and the plural of ἕκαστος has, as often, the sense of each of several things taken singly.

[17]As above, "anything" in more idiomatic English.

[18]μὴ οὐ ... ᾖ: μὴ οὐ with the subjunctive for ironically doubtful assertion is, as Burnet and Smythe (Smythe §1801) point out, another peculiarly Platonic idiom. The initial ἀλλά (*but*) is more naturally omitted in English.

[19]The Greek quite naturally omits the repetition of *to escape*, which is clearly understood from the parallel construction.

γὰρ θανάτου θεῖ. καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἅτε βραδὺς ὢν καὶ πρεσβύτης ὑπὸ τοῦ βραδυτέρου ἑάλων, οἱ δ' ἐμοὶ κατήγοροι ἅτε δεινοὶ καὶ ὀξεῖς ὄντες ὑπὸ τοῦ θάττονος, τῆς κακίας. καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἄπειμι ὑφ' ὑμῶν θανάτου δίκην ὀφλών, οὗτοι δ' ὑπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ὠφληκότες μοχθηρίαν καὶ ἀδικίαν. καὶ ἐγώ τε τῷ τιμήματι ἐμμένω καὶ οὗτοι. ταῦτα μέν που ἴσως οὕτως καὶ ἔδει σχεῖν, καὶ οἶμαι αὐτὰ μετρίως ἔχειν.

than death. And now I, being slow and old, have been caught by the slower, but my accusers, being clever and sharp,[20] by the swifter, wickedness.[21] And now I leave owing[22] at your hands a penalty of death, and they leave[23] convicted at the hands of the truth of wickedness and injustice. And both I and they await the penalty. And I suppose this was perhaps necessarily so, and I think it to be fair enough.[24]

[20]Although neither adjective is related to speed, in (17a) δεινός (see fn.4 on p.2) has the sense *clever*, and ὀξύς shares with the English *sharp* not just the root meaning, but the numerous metaphorical senses, including the sense of mental acuity.

[21]Instead of πονηρία, as above, Plato here uses κακία, a more generic word for *ill* or *badness*.

[22]ὀφλισκάνω means to owe or be liable for a penalty or to be convicted of an offense, with the former sense in this clause and the latter in the next.

[23]Again, omitted but clearly understood in the Greek.

[24]*Fair enough* here in the colloquial sense of this phrase. For the adverb μετρίως, LSJ gives *moderately, within due limits, in due measure, fairly.* Burnet regards it as the "urbane equivalent" of καλῶς (*well*).

(39c) τὸ δὲ δὴ μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπιθυμῶ ὑμῖν χρησμῳδῆσαι, ὦ καταψηφισάμενοί μου· καὶ γάρ εἰμι ἤδη ἐνταῦθα ἐν ᾧ μάλιστα ἄνθρωποι χρησμῳδοῦσιν, ὅταν μέλλωσιν ἀποθανεῖσθαι. φημὶ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες οἳ ἐμὲ ἀπεκτόνατε, τιμωρίαν ὑμῖν ἥξειν εὐθὺς μετὰ τὸν ἐμὸν θάνατον πολὺ χαλεπωτέραν νὴ Δία ἢ οἵαν ἐμὲ ἀπεκτόνατε· νῦν γὰρ τοῦτο εἴργασθε οἰόμενοι μὲν ἀπαλλάξεσθαι τοῦ διδόναι ἔλεγχον τοῦ βίου, τὸ δὲ ὑμῖν πολὺ ἐναντίον ἀποβήσεται, ὡς ἐγώ φημι. πλείους ἔσονται ὑμᾶς (39d) οἱ ἐλέγχοντες, οὓς νῦν ἐγὼ κατεῖχον, ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ᾐσθάνεσθε· καὶ χαλεπώτεροι ἔσονται ὅσῳ νεώτεροί εἰσιν, καὶ ὑμεῖς μᾶλλον ἀγανακτήσετε. εἰ γὰρ οἴεσθε ἀποκτείνοντες ἀνθρώπους ἐπισχήσειν τοῦ ὀνειδίζειν τινὰ ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐκ ὀρθῶς ζῆτε, οὐ καλῶς διανοεῖσθε· οὐ γάρ ἐσθ' αὕτη ἡ ἀπαλλαγὴ οὔτε πάνυ δυνατὴ οὔτε καλή, ἀλλ' ἐκείνη καὶ καλλίστη καὶ ῥᾴστη, μὴ τοὺς ἄλλους κολούειν ἀλλ' ἑαυτὸν παρασκευάζειν ὅπως ἔσται ὡς βέλτιστος. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ὑμῖν τοῖς καταψηφισαμένοις μαντευσάμενος ἀπαλλάττομαι.

Next, those who condemned me, I want to prophesy to you[1] — for I am presently at the time when men especially prophesy, when they are about to die.[2] I say, then,[3] men who put me to death,[4] that forthwith after my death vengeance will come upon you, much harsher, by Zeus, than the vengeance you took by putting me to death:[5] for you have now done this thinking yourselves to be rid of giving an account of your life, but much the opposite will come about for you, as I think. Those putting you to the test will be numerous, ones whom I now hold back, and you are not aware of. And they will be that much harder to deal with as they are younger, and you will be much more angry. For if you think that by putting men to death you will hold anyone back from reproaching you that you don't live rightly, you do not think well. For this riddance[6] is neither at all possible nor good, but rather that[7] most good and most easy, that of not hindering others but rather making oneself as good as possible.[8] Now having prophesied this to you who have condemned me, I am through with you.[9]

[1]"Those who condemned me" is vocative. More literally, the phrase τὸ δὲ δὴ μετὰ τοῦτο is roughly "the thing after this," here meaning what Socrates wants to say next.

[2]Literally, "for I am already here (at the point in time), in/during which men especially prophesy." μέλλωσιν (*about to*) here has the sense of being on the verge of. It was believed that the dying had great powers of prophesy.

[3]The γάρ is epexegetic: it indicates that this is the prophesy. See the end note on epexegetic γάρ on p.41.

[4]Again, vocative.

[5]Brachylogical; literally, "than which sort you put me to death."

[6]LSJ: ἀπαλλαγή = *deliverance, release, relief from* or *riddance of* a thing.

[7]Meaning the deliverance that comes from the things cited in the next clause.

[8]Here καλή (and its superlative καλλίστη), while also generically used for *good*, has a root sense of *beautiful* and hence may, as in this context, mean *morally beautiful*, *virtuous*. The superlative βέλτιστος is more specifically *best* in a moral sense. Literally, "preparing/making oneself how he will be as good as possible."

[9]ἀπαλλάττω is the verb corresponding to ἀπαλλαγή, and hence in this context has the sense of being delivered from or relieved or rid of. This might also have been rendered as "am finished with you" or "dismiss you."

(39e) τοῖς δὲ ἀποψηφισαμένοις ἡδέως ἂν διαλεχθείην ὑπὲρ τοῦ γεγονότος τουτουὶ πράγματος, ἐν ᾧ οἱ ἄρχοντες ἀσχολίαν ἄγουσι καὶ οὔπω ἔρχομαι οἷ ἐλθόντα με δεῖ τεθνάναι. ἀλλά μοι, ὦ ἄνδρες, παραμείνατε τοσοῦτον χρόνον· οὐδὲν γὰρ κωλύει διαμυθολογῆσαι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἕως ἔξεστιν. ὑμῖν (40a) γὰρ ὡς φίλοις οὖσιν ἐπιδεῖξαι ἐθέλω τὸ νυνί μοι συμβεβηκὸς τί ποτε νοεῖ. ἐμοὶ γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί – ὑμᾶς γὰρ δικαστὰς καλῶν ὀρθῶς ἂν καλοίην – θαυμάσιόν τι γέγονεν. ἡ γὰρ εἰωθυῖά μοι μαντικὴ ἡ τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐν μὲν τῷ πρόσθεν χρόνῳ παντὶ πάνυ πυκνὴ ἀεὶ ἦν καὶ πάνυ ἐπὶ σμικροῖς ἐναντιουμένη, εἴ τι μέλλοιμι μὴ ὀρθῶς πράξειν. νυνὶ δὲ συμβέβηκέ μοι ἅπερ

And with those having voted for acquittal I would with pleasure converse about what has happened,[1] while the officials are busy and I am not yet going off to where I must die.[2] But abide with me, men, for so much time:[3] for[4] nothing prevents our conversing with each other while it is permitted. For I wish to point out to you, since you are friends, what that which has just now happened to me means.[5] For, jurymen, — for calling you jurors would be correct[6] — a wondrous thing has happened to me:[7] my habitual divine sign at every former time was always very frequent and opposing every little thing, if I should be about to do anything not rightly.[8]

[1]Literally, "about this thing having arisen." The deictic iota (see the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41) on τουτουί (*this*) adds emphasis and immediacy.

[2]Literally, "I am not yet going [to there], going whither it is necessary that I die."

[3]That is, for as long as the officials are busy.

[4]This and the several following instances of γάρ are epexegetic, and most could equally well have been omitted in English. See the end note on epexegetic γάρ on p.41.

[5]Literally, "to you, on the grounds of [your] being friends, the thing having just now happened to me, what it means." τί ποτε is a more emphatic form of τί (*what*) that could, more archaically, be rendered "what pray."

[6]Literally, "for I, calling you jurors, would call [you] rightly/correctly."

[7]Literally, "a wondrous thing has arisen for me." The γάρ (*for*) is again epexegetic: it is explaining what the wondrous things is, and we have rendered it implicitly by the preceding colon rather than explicitly.

[8]We have here had to take some liberties in order to render this passage in intelligible English. But while it is a critical passage, there are also aspects of the Greek text and its meaning that are uncertain. εἰωθυῖά μοι = *customary/usual for me*, here rendered as *habitual*, has the sense of something familiar and commonly experienced. We have taken ἡ ... μαντικὴ ἡ τοῦ δαιμονίου as synonymous with τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον (*the sign of the god, the divine sign*) below; more literally, it would be *the divination/prophetic power of the divine [one/thing]*. But, as Burnet points out, the τοῦ δαιμονίου is almost without precedent in Plato, its precise meaning is obscure, and it may well therefore be a later interpolation. LSJ: μαντικός = *of or for a soothsayer, prophetic, oracular*, with μαντική (as normally in Greek with the feminine of -ικος adjectives) serving as the corresponding abstract substantive. LSJ: πυκνή has the sense *close-packed, crowded, thick, dense* and hence, temporally, *frequent*. More literally, πάνυ ἐπὶ σμικροῖς = "to very little things." The "if ... not rightly" is a literal rendering.

ὁρᾶτε καὶ αὐτοί, ταυτὶ ἅ γε δὴ οἰηθείη ἄν τις καὶ νομίζεται ἔσχατα κακῶν εἶναι· ἐμοὶ δὲ (40b) οὔτε ἐξιόντι ἔωθεν οἴκοθεν ἠναντιώθη τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον, οὔτε ἡνίκα ἀνέβαινον ἐνταυθοῖ ἐπὶ τὸ δικαστήριον, οὔτε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ οὐδαμοῦ μέλλοντί τι ἐρεῖν. καίτοι ἐν ἄλλοις λόγοις πολλαχοῦ δή με ἐπέσχε λέγοντα μεταξύ· νῦν δὲ οὐδαμοῦ περὶ ταύτην τὴν πρᾶξιν οὔτ᾽ ἐν ἔργῳ οὐδενὶ οὔτ᾽ ἐν λόγῳ ἠναντίωταί μοι. τί οὖν αἴτιον εἶναι ὑπολαμβάνω; ἐγὼ ὑμῖν ἐρῶ· κινδυνεύει γάρ μοι τὸ συμβεβηκὸς τοῦτο ἀγαθὸν γεγονέναι, καὶ οὐκ ἔσθ᾽ ὅπως ἡμεῖς ὀρθῶς ὑπολαμβάνομεν, (40c) ὅσοι οἰόμεθα κακὸν εἶναι τὸ τεθνάναι. μέγα μοι τεκμήριον τούτου γέγονεν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ᾽ ὅπως οὐκ ἠναντιώθη ἄν μοι τὸ εἰωθὸς σημεῖον, εἰ μή τι ἔμελλον ἐγὼ ἀγαθὸν πράξειν.

But now[9] there has happened to me the very thing that even you yourselves see, this,[10] which someone might think and believe to be the most extreme of ills: but the divine sign[11] opposed me neither departing from home in the morning, nor when I came here to the court, nor anywhere in my discourse[12] as I was about to say anything. And yet in other discourses it checked me in the midst of speaking in many places: but now nowhere has it opposed me in this matter,[13] neither in any act[14] nor word. Now what do I take to be the explanation?[15] I will tell you: this that has happened is likely a good thing for me,[16] and it is not possible that those of us suppose rightly who think dying to be an ill.[17] And there was a great sure sign of this for me: for it is not possible that my customary sign would not have opposed me, unless I were about to do something good.

[9]The *ἐν μέν* of the preceding sentence began a *μέν … δέ* construction that is completed by the *νυνὶ δέ* here: the Greek explicitly contrasts "at every former time" with "but now."

[10]The deictic iota on the *ταυτί* adds emphasis and immediacy. See the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41.

[11]More literally, *τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον* = "the sign of the god." *σημεῖον* has a great many senses related to *sign* or *signal*, including being *a sign from the gods, omen.*

[12]Again, *λόγος* has a wide variety of senses related to its root sense of a thing that is said. "Speech" seemed to imply too formal a presentation, but it might here also have been rendered "words." And so also in the next sentence.

[13]Meaning the trial.

[14]Literally, "deed," meaning anything he did.

[15]*αἴτιον* means the explanation, the cause, the reason for.

[16]Literally, "this thing having happened/come to pass for me is likely to be good."

[17]Literally, "that we suppose rightly, however many [of us] . . . ." *κακόν* is more precisely a predicate adjective, with the generic sense of *bad, evil, ill.*

Ἐννοήσωμεν δὲ καὶ τῇδε ὡς πολλὴ ἐλπίς ἐστιν ἀγαθὸν αὐτὸ εἶναι. δυοῖν γὰρ θάτερόν ἐστιν τὸ τεθνάναι· ἢ γὰρ οἷον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν τεθνεῶτα, ἢ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει οὖσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῇ ψυχῇ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον. καὶ εἴτε δὴ μηδεμία αἴσθησίς ἐστιν ἀλλ' (40d) *οἷον ὕπνος ἐπειδάν τις καθεύδων μηδ' ὄναρ μηδὲν ὁρᾷ, θαυμάσιον κέρδος ἂν εἴη ὁ θάνατος — ἐγὼ γὰρ ἂν οἶμαι, εἴ τινα ἐκλεξάμενον δέοι ταύτην τὴν νύκτα ἐν ᾗ οὕτω κατέδαρθεν ὥστε μηδὲ ὄναρ ἰδεῖν, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας τὰς τοῦ βίου τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ ἀντιπαραθέντα ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ δέοι σκεψάμενον εἰπεῖν πόσας ἄμεινον καὶ ἥδιον ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας ταύτης τῆς νυκτὸς βεβίωκεν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ βίῳ, οἶμαι ἂν μὴ ὅτι ἰδιώτην τινά, ἀλλὰ τὸν μέγαν βασιλέα εὐαριθμήτους* (40e) *ἂν εὑρεῖν αὐτὸν ταύτας πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας — εἰ οὖν τοιοῦτον ὁ θάνατός ἐστιν, κέρδος ἔγωγε λέγω· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλείων ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται οὕτω δὴ εἶναι ἢ μία νύξ. εἰ δ' αὖ οἷον ἀποδημῆσαί ἐστιν ὁ θάνατος ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ἐστιν τὰ λεγόμενα, ὡς ἄρα ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεῶτες, τί μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν τούτου εἴη ἄν, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί; εἰ γάρ τις* (41a) *ἀφικόμενος εἰς Ἅιδου, ἀπαλλαγεὶς τουτωνὶ τῶν φασκόντων δικαστῶν εἶναι, εὑρήσει τοὺς ὡς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, οἵπερ καὶ λέγονται ἐκεῖ δικάζειν, Μίνως τε καὶ Ῥαδάμανθυς καὶ Αἰακὸς καὶ Τριπτόλεμος καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσοι τῶν ἡμιθέων δίκαιοι ἐγένοντο ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν βίῳ, ἆρα φαύλη ἂν εἴη ἡ ἀποδημία; ἢ αὖ Ὀρφεῖ συγγενέσθαι καὶ Μουσαίῳ καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ Ὁμήρῳ ἐπὶ πόσῳ ἄν τις δέξαιτ' ἂν ὑμῶν; ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ πολλάκις ἐθέλω τεθνάναι εἰ ταῦτ' ἔστιν ἀληθῆ. ἐπεὶ* (41b) *ἔμοιγε καὶ αὐτῷ θαυμαστὴ ἂν εἴη ἡ διατριβὴ αὐτόθι, ὁπότε ἐντύχοιμι Παλαμήδει καὶ Αἴαντι τῷ Τελαμῶνος καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος τῶν παλαιῶν διὰ κρίσιν ἄδικον τέθνηκεν, ἀντιπαραβάλλοντι τὰ ἐμαυτοῦ πάθη πρὸς τὰ ἐκείνων — ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι, οὐκ ἂν ἀηδὲς εἴη — καὶ δὴ τὸ μέγιστον, τοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐξετάζοντα καὶ ἐρευνῶντα ὥσπερ τοὺς ἐνταῦθα διάγειν, τίς αὐτῶν σοφός ἐστιν καὶ τίς οἴεται μέν, ἔστιν δ' οὔ. ἐπὶ πόσῳ δ' ἄν τις, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, δέξαιτο ἐξετάσαι τὸν ἐπὶ Τροίαν ἀγαγόντα* (41c) *τὴν πολλὴν στρατιὰν ἢ Ὀδυσσέα ἢ Σίσυφον ἢ ἄλλους μυρίους ἄν τις εἴποι καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας, οἷς ἐκεῖ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ συνεῖναι καὶ ἐξετάζειν ἀμήχανον ἂν εἴη εὐδαιμονίας; πάντως οὐ δήπου τούτου γε ἕνεκα οἱ ἐκεῖ ἀποκτείνουσι· τά τε γὰρ ἄλλα εὐδαιμονέστεροί εἰσιν οἱ ἐκεῖ τῶν ἐνθάδε, καὶ ἤδη τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἀθάνατοί εἰσιν, εἴπερ γε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀληθῆ.*

Now let us consider also in this way how there is great hope that it is a good thing. For dying is either of two things: either it is such kind of thing as to be nothing, and the one having died to have no perception of anything, or, as they say,[1] it happens to be some change and migration of the soul from this place to another.[2] And if it is an absence of perception and like sleep when someone sleeping doesn't even dream,[3] death would be a wondrous gain — for I think, if someone had to pick out[4] that night in which he slept so as not even to have a dream, and comparing the other nights and days of his life to that night, had upon consideration to say how many days and nights better and sweeter than that night he has lived in his life, I think that not just an ordinary person,[5] but even a great king would find these few in number[6] compared to the other days and nights — if now death is such a thing, I say it is a gain: for the whole of time thus seems to be no more than one night. But if in turn death is like a migration from here to another place, and what they say is true,[7] that all the dead are there, what greater good would there be than this, jurymen? For if someone having arrived in Hades, being rid of these ones[8] claiming to be judges, will find[9] the ones truly judges, the very ones they say to be judges there, Minos and Aiakos and Triptolemos and all the other demigods who[10] were just in their lives, would the change of abode be a sorry thing?[11] Or in turn to associate with Orpheus and Mousaios and Hesiod and Homer, how much would you give for that?[12] I would be willing to die many times over if these things are true. Since particularly for myself the way of life[13] there would be wondrous, when I should meet Palamedes and Telamonian Aias and all the other ancients who died by unjust judgment,[14] comparing my experiences to theirs — as I think, it would not be unpleasant — and what is greatest, to pass the time examining and putting to the test those there just as those here — who of them is wise, and who thinks he is, but is not. How much would one of you, jurymen, give to examine the one leading the great army to Troy or Odysseus or Sisyphos or myriad others, both men and women, someone might name,[15] with whom there to converse and mingle and examine would be an inconceivable happiness?[16] To be sure the ones there do not of course put men[17] to death on this account: for the ones there are happier than those here both in other respects, and in that[18] they are already immortal for the rest of time, if indeed what they say is true.[19]

[1]Literally, "according to the [things] said."

[2]Literally, "from the place here to another place."

[3]Literally, "is no perception, but rather like sleep when someone sleeping doesn't even see any dream." In English one has a dream; in Greek one sees a dream. So also below.

The slight roughness of the Greek in this passage conveys that these words were delivered with an enthusiastic, almost delighted haste.

[4]Literally, "if it should be necessary that someone pick out." So also the construction in the next clause.

[5]Literally, "some private citizen."

[6]More literally, "easily countable."

[7]Literally, "and the [things] said are true."

[8]*τουτωνί*: "these ones here," with the deictic iota indicating that Socrates is referring to, perhaps even with a sweep of his arm, those having voted to condemn him. See the explanatory endnote on deictic iotas on p.41.

[9]That is, will encounter in Hades.

[10]Literally, "and the others, how many of the demigods."

[11]We have here rendered *φαύλη* as *sorry* in the colloquial contemporary sense; *base* and *mean* seemed too archaic. For *φαῦλος* LSJ gives, for the sense in which it is used here, *trivial, paltry, petty, sorry, poor*. *ἀποδημία* is the substantive corresponding to the verb *ἀποδημῆσαι*, rendered as *migration* above.

[12]Literally, "for how much would one of you receive [that in exchange]?" And so also below.

[13]On *διατριβή*, see fn.3 on p.27.

[14]Literally, "and if any other of the ancients died by . . . ," the construction Greek commonly uses to express the sense of the given English rendering.

[15]Literally, "say [by name]."

[16]The Greek *ἀμήχανον* has the sense of an inconceivable amount: literally, "an inconceivable [amount] of happiness."

[17]"Men" is unexpressed but understood in the Greek.

[18]"In that" is absent in the Greek, but required to convey the sense in English.

[19]Again, literally "the [things] said [are] true."

Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑμᾶς χρή, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, εὐέλπιδας εἶναι πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, καὶ ἕν τι τοῦτο διανοεῖσθαι ἀληθές, ὅτι (41d) *οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνδρὶ ἀγαθῷ κακὸν οὐδὲν οὔτε ζῶντι οὔτε τελευτήσαντι, οὐδὲ ἀμελεῖται ὑπὸ θεῶν τὰ τούτου πράγματα· οὐδὲ τὰ ἐμὰ νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου γέγονεν, ἀλλά μοι δῆλόν ἐστι τοῦτο, ὅτι ἤδη τεθνάναι καὶ ἀπηλλάχθαι πραγμάτων βέλτιον ἦν μοι. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐμὲ οὐδαμοῦ ἀπέτρεψεν τὸ σημεῖον, καὶ ἔγωγε τοῖς καταψηφισαμένοις μου καὶ τοῖς κατηγόροις οὐ πάνυ χαλεπαίνω. καίτοι οὐ ταύτῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ κατεψηφίζοντό μου καὶ κατηγόρουν, ἀλλ' οἰόμενοι βλάπτειν·* (41e) *τοῦτο αὐτοῖς ἄξιον μέμφεσθαι. τοσόνδε μέντοι αὐτῶν δέομαι· τοὺς υἱεῖς μου, ἐπειδὰν ἡβήσωσι, τιμωρήσασθε, ὦ ἄνδρες, ταὐτὰ ταῦτα λυποῦντες ἅπερ ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐλύπουν, ἐὰν ὑμῖν δοκῶσιν ἢ χρημάτων ἢ ἄλλου του πρότερον ἐπιμελεῖσθαι ἢ ἀρετῆς, καὶ ἐὰν δοκῶσί τι εἶναι μηδὲν ὄντες, ὀνειδίζετε αὐτοῖς ὥσπερ ἐγὼ ὑμῖν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐπιμελοῦνται ὧν δεῖ, καὶ οἴονταί τι εἶναι ὄντες οὐδενὸς ἄξιοι. καὶ ἐὰν* (42a) *ταῦτα ποιῆτε, δίκαια πεπονθὼς ἐγὼ ἔσομαι ὑφ' ὑμῶν αὐτός τε καὶ οἱ υἱεῖς. ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἤδη ὥρα ἀπιέναι, ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀποθανουμένῳ, ὑμῖν δὲ βιωσομένοις· ὁπότεροι δὲ ἡμῶν ἔρχονται ἐπὶ ἄμεινον πρᾶγμα, ἄδηλον παντὶ πλὴν ἢ τῷ θεῷ.*

But you ought, jurymen, to be of good hope[1] with regard to death, and to consider this one thing to be true, that there is no ill[2] for a good man, neither living nor having died,[3] nor are his affairs uncared for by the gods; nor yet have my present circumstances arisen of their own accord, but this is clear to me: that it was already better for me to die and be rid of my affairs,[4] and on this account[5] the sign nowhere turned me away,[6] and I am not very upset with my accusers and those condemning me. And yet they did not accuse and condemn me with this intention,[7] but intending to do harm: in this they merit censure.[8] Yet I ask this much of them: take vengeance,[9] when they come of age, on my sons, giving them the very same grief that I gave you, if they seem to you to care for money or anything else in preference to[10] virtue, and if they seem to be something, in fact being nothing,[11] reproach them just as I did you, that they are not concerned about the things that they ought to be, and that they think themselves to be something, being worthy of nothing.[12] And if you do this, I will have suffered justice at your hands, both I and my sons. But now it is time to go, for me to die, and for you to live. And which of us goes to the better thing, is unclear to everyone except to the god.[13]

[1]LSJ: *εὔελπις* = *hopeful, of good hope, cheerful, sanguine.* Burnet points out that the noun *ἐλπίς* (*hope*) was the Orphic term for *faith.*

[2]*κακός* is a generic adjective for *bad*, and hence *ill*, *evil*, or the like.

[3]Or, equally well, "neither while he is living nor after he has died." *ζῶντι* and *τελευτήσαντι* are, respectively, present and aorist participle, with the latter, as frequently, connoting not just simple but prior action.

[4]Literally, "be rid of affairs"; we have supplied "my," but it could also be omitted. The thought behind this sentiment was certainly not the infirmities of old age — at 70, Socrates was still in full mental and physical vigor — , but rather that Socrates had earned respite from his toils and sufferings in fulfilling the mission of the oracle.

[5]We take *διὰ τοῦτο* to go with *ἀπέτρεψεν*: it precedes *καί* by hyperbaton, for emphasis.

[6]That is, from what he was about to do or say at any point in presenting his defense.

[7]That is, not because they saw, as Socrates did, that it was better for him to be rid of his affairs.

[8]Literally, "this is worthy/a just cause to find fault with them."

[9]*τιμωρέω* can mean to assist someone by righting a wrong or to avenge someone by exacting revenge, but with different constructions; the middle voice with the accusative means *take vengeance on.* Here it is, as the following clause makes still more clear, used ironically.

[10]Literally, "before."

[11]Literally, "to be something, being nothing." Though it is clumsy in English, we have chosen to adhere closely to the Greek. This is equivalent to, but more general than, "seem to be wise, but not to be wise." See fn.20 and fn.22 on p.29.

[12]Literally, "that they think to be something, being worthy of nothing." We have again chosen to adhere very closely to the Greek at the expense of naturalness in English.

[13]Socrates has throughout variously used the plural and the singular of the word for *god* (*θεός*), with the singular (*ὁ θεός*) (*the god*) sometimes referring specifically to the oracle and at others having debatable significance. Here it would seem that by making *τῷ θεῷ* (*the god*) the last two words of the dialogue, Plato is making it emphatically clear that Socrates was a monotheist. But contrast this with *οὐδὲ ἀμελεῖται ὑπὸ θεῶν τὰ τούτου πράγματα* ("nor yet are his affairs uncared for by the gods") immediately above in (41d).

A note on participles.

Whereas English has only two participles, Greek has, depending on how one counts degenerate morphologies, ten or twelve, and makes correspondingly extensive use of them, very frequently with particles indicating the logical relation of the participial phrase to the main clause. Often these participial phrases need to be rendered in English as subordinate clauses, with the logical relation conveyed by the subordinating conjunction. These situations will occur frequently enough that they will generally be explicitly noted only when the English rendering differs in some critical way from the Greek.

A note on the particle γάρ.

Occurring 128 times in the text, γάρ (*for*) very frequently has a causal force equivalent to *since* or *because*, but from this, as the reader may glean from the 57 pages that Denniston devotes to the particle γάρ, derive a great many senses and uses of varied shades. Very common among these is the epexegetic γάρ (Denn., γάρ II & III), which, as perhaps best explained by Smythe (§2808), "has the force of *now, namely, that is, for example* .... It usually introduces, as an explanation, the details of that which was promised in an incomplete or general statement; sometimes, without any such statement, it introduces a new fact." In spite of Smythe's admonition that it is usually not to be translated, we have more often than not been unable to resist the temptation to render it explicitly, usually as *for*, even at the price of some awkwardness in English.

A note on deictic iotas.

An iota suffix, called the *deictic iota*, can be added to demonstratives in Greek to indicate that the person is present and is being pointed out: for example, οὗτος = *this one*, *this person*, but οὑτοσί = *this one here*, *this person here*, or simply *this one* or *this person*, with the reader imagining the speaker pointing out the person in question. Plato makes frequent use of the deictic iota to indicate that a person was present at the trial. The deictic iota is also sometimes used more figuratively to convey immediacy and emphasis in the same way as italics in written and emphatic intonation in spoken English.